

AN ADMIRABLE
METHOD
TO LOVE, SERVE
AND HONOUR THE
B. Virgin MARY.

With diuers practicable Exercises thereof. 13. 5. 51

Al inriched with Choice Examples.

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Permissu Superiorum.

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TO THE NOBLE
AND VERTVOVS LADY
the Lady Audley.



ADAM,

*I present you
with this
translation,
not to remaine in your hāds,
but through them to pass vn-
to the publick. So shal it dou-
bly*

bly bee aduantaged : First,
more gratefully accepted of,
comming immediatly from
one so worthy as your self,
and next be beleued worthie
the acceptation, that I dare
offer it to your sight, so wel
verst in al the Original
Languages. So, Madam,
goe my obligations multi-
plying to the Infinite, whilst
I cannot think of paying you
one curtesy but I receiue for
it two ; The whilst I must
euer remaine.

Your most obliged, R. F.



A S V M M A R Y
of the whole contense of
this present Booke, for the
Readers better compre-
hension thereof.



THE whole scope of
this present Treatise
is no other then to
teach in a deuout and
excellēt manner how
to Reuerence and adore with pro-
found Inclinations our B. Lady
and mistrisse the Queene of Hea-
uen; as a preparatiue to which,
we haue indeauoured to declare,
ā 3 her

Summary.

her heroical vertues, greatnesse, excellencies and sublime prerogatives : And by the way is to be considered that although Adoration be peculiar to God alone, yet according to diuines distinction thereof, it also may be appropriated to the B. Virgin, to Angels, and other Saints and thereby become common to God & Man. As we may cleerly gather from diuers passages of the holy Scripture as namely in Paralip. chap. 26. when it is sayd ; *And they inclined and adored first God, and afterwards the King.*

These Adorations then admit a three-fould distinction of Latria , Dulia , and Hyperdulia, where of the first is proper vnto God alone , in regard of his infinit and increated Greatnes ; the
second

Summary.

second hath reference to such creatures as aduance in sanctity and glory aboue the rest, which sanctity and glory arriuing in any on to more sublimity (as in the B. Virgin) with the more sublime honour of Hyperdulia, cōsequently we are to reuerence them: But before we proceed to the exercise of this Adoration we prefix an exhortation to deuotion towards her, and declare siue Priuiledges, her seruants are indowed with al, setting down (as preamble to the worke) those conditions and qualities which are requisit in her deuots. Then we pass to the explication of these Adorations, in the first Chapter, declaring their excellency, in the second how grateful and acceptable they are to the B. Virgin, and in the fower fol-

Summary.

following ones, fower forcible
argumēts are establiſhed to proue
her deſeruing that adoration. The
firſt deduced from her being the
Mother of Almighty God. The
next for her being elected aboue
al other Saints, and al the Quires
of Heauen. The third for her ſo-
ueraine power and authority,
ouer al Creatures: And the fourth
and laſt for her being an affection-
nat Mother vnto vs al. Then we
come to the praſtiſe of theſe
Adorations, (or Genuflexions)
ſhewing how they are deuoutly
to be performed, as wel in the
interiour as exteriour, and heer-
vpon we take occaſion to inlarge
our diſcourſe touching the Ado-
rations due to God, to his Bleſſed
Saints and Angels, &c. Imploy-
ing the remaine of the following
Chapters

Summary.

Chapters, in setting down diuers practical wayes of honouring the B. Virgin applying to euery on its proper Reuerence and Adoratiōs: but principally we insist vpon those twelue sublime prerogatiues of hers, prefigured by the twelue Starres, in her crowne of which S. Iohn in his Apocalips make mention.

Now this aduertisement is giuen to al that although the choice of many exercises of adoratiōs be proposed in this present worke, notwithstanding they are only to fix on, which they may find most gust and comfort in, and especially to beware-of entergiuing to much at once least they become thereby but more negligent in performance of them, and a too precipitious desir of cōming
ā v soon

Summary.

soon to end, make them but haſt too much vpon the way, and per- forme them without fruit and deuotion.

Wherefore we counſel rather to make choice of ſome few we may perſorme with mediocrity of deuotion, then of many with danger of tepidity & diſtraction. Notwithſtanding when any feaſt occurs, vnto which we haue a particular deuotion (as thoſe of our Bleſſed Sauour his Mother or the like) we may then multiply our Genuflexions to a hundred a day, (for example) or a thou- ſand diſtributed equally to ſeue- ral dayes or nights of the octaue as we pleaſe, as we ſhal more largely declare in the following Treatiſe by the aſſiſtance of Al- mighty God, and the fauour of
his

A Summary.

his holy Mother , al which we
dedicat to the praise of God from
whom al Good proceeds , to the
Blessed Virgin his most holy Mo-
ther , and to Saint Francis our
Glorious Patriarch.





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AN ADMIRABLE
METHOD

TO LOVE, SERVE
and Reuerence the Glorions
Virgin Mary our B. Aduocate.

*Or a pious Exhortation to be deuoted
to the Queene of Heauen.*



VERY faithful Chri-
stian is to Indeaour
to his vtermost to be-
come deuot and duly
resighned to the ser-
uice of the Glorious Queene of
Heauen whom the Angels serue
the

the Arch-Angels adore , the
Thrones honour , the Cherubins
and Seraphins respect, and in fine
the highest aduāced in the Court
of Heauen account it their Glory
to make Court vnto Knowing
how aduantagious her fauour
would be to them, for if a Cour-
tier heer accounts it for so high a
felicity , to haue the glory of
possessing the heard of some great
Princesse as promissing himselfe
great honours and dignities from
thence , and how much more , if
besides al this he were assured
of that dearer place in her me-
mory as shee could refuse him
nothing but if he chaunced to fal
into disgrace , would vndertake
his defence & reconcile him with
his Prince againe free him from
the punishments he had merited,
obtaine

7
obtaine his repeal if he were banished from the Court, and not only restore him to his former estate againe, but aduance him higher then euer he was before, what a blessing what an excesse of Ioy would this fortunat fauourit receiue from thence what would he do, or rather what nor do in gratitud for so great an obligation? what meanes what sort of seruices would he most inuent to honour her withal ! assueredly both night & day, he would haue no other thought then how to expresse his thankfulnes to her in some particular manner, and then would be no danger so great, no seruice so painful he would not, go through with al, to maintaine himself in her better graces stil.

And yet farr more happy a
thou-

thousand times are the seruants & fauourits of the Queene of Heauen, in that they are assured she is perpetually mindful of them that she beares them an vnequall loue, that they may hope the Greateſt of fauours from her and that ſhe cannot be wanting to them in their afflictions that as a faithful Aduocate ſhe doth Embrace their protection in al occurrences, that ſhe preuails her ſelf of al occaſiōs to render the Eternal king her B. Sōne propitious to them, and what is moſt of al deliuers thē from eternal paines, & brings them in fine to the poſſeſſion of the glory and happines of the Kingdome of Heauen.

From al which we may gather ſiue rare Priuiledges thoſe truely deuote vnto the Mother of God
Inioy

Inioy thereby the first is that she
loues them with a profound and
cordial affection; the second that
she honours them with diuers
particular fauours; the third that
she is alwayes ready to assist them
in their necessities as after as they
implore her aide; the fourth that
as a most careful Aduocate with
particular sollicitud she vndertake
their deffence and renders them
propitious the eternal King of
Heauen, reconciling them into
him, when they haue offended
him; the fifth and last that she de-
liuers them from eternal damna-
tion. Let vs consider then and
examine them on by on which
great exactnes to animat euery
soule to the affection of so deare
and great a Lady.

THE



THE I. PRIVILEGE.

*How affectionat the B. Vir-
gin is to al deuout Chri-
stians who serue and ho-
nour her With humble
reuerence.*



ALTHOUGH 'tis true
the sacred Virgin
being al loue & cha-
rity loueth al, & like
the Sunn sayes the
deuout Saint Bernard) displayes a
like the beams of her sweetnes &
benignity ouer al the world. Yet
certaine it is withal shee beholds
those with a more deere regard

A

who

2 *An Method to loue*

who loue her and render her the most dutiful seruices and are most assidual in reuerencing her. And most laudable and holie is that obsequiousnes by whose exteriour signes is manifested the interiour affections of the hart, for so (as S. Gregory says) the prooffe of the affection is the performāce of the thing. Now how reciprocal the B. Virgins loue is to vs againe, her self declares in those words attributed to her by the Holy Ghost; those who loue mee, I loue; as much as to say, I haue a particular loue for those who affect mee with al their hart and soule, and endeauour to render such honour as they imagine the most acceptable; and what sort of loue it is her self declares in another passage of Scripture where shee sayes:
I am

and serue the B. V. Mary. 3

I am the mother of beautilous
loue; signifying the loue shee af-
fects her seruāts with, to be firme,
compleat at al parts, and truly
worthy so diuine and louing a
mother.

This glorious *Queene* tenders
vs as her owne Children, in that
shee is our Mother, and so neare
and strait a bond tyes vs together,
as her being a descēdant from our
generation, flesh of our flesh,
bloud of our bloud, bone of our
bone, for which reason shee can-
not but affect vs much, especially
if wee endeauour to deserue it by
our constancie and fidelitie in ser-
uing her. Shee is the Mother of
Iesus-Christ true God and Man,
God is our Father : *Our Father*
which art in heauen : his Sonne
Iesus-Christ our brother : Go to

A 2 my

4 *An Method to loue*

my brothers, (sayes he to Mary Magdalen : Oh infinit sweetnes of loue !) Go to my brothers and tel them, I ascend to my father & your father, to my God and yours. The Blessed Virgin is then our Mother, Iesus Christ the increated Word our brother, and the Eternal father our father.

„ Conforme to this, S. Ber-
„ nard on these words, *Ecce mater*
„ *tua*, behold thy Mother, argues
„ thus : If Mary be thy mother,
„ O man, (sayes he,) then Ie-
„ sus Christ is thy brother, his
„ father thine, his Kingdom
„ thou hast right to, and Con-
„ sequently the grace of Mary is
„ thy riches, since the mother
„ Vsually layes vp for the Chil-
„ dren, so thy necessities goe
vnto

and serue the B.V. Mary. 5

„ vnto her hart; for the mother
„ for these wants of her Chil-
„ dren is moued at hart; O take
„ her then for thine. Thus S.
Bernard : that eloquent Do-
ctour. And certainly our condi-
tion is most great and highly ad-
uantag'd aboue al others, to haue
the Mother of God, Empresse of
the Vniuerse, for Mother, and
her only sonne, the King of glory,
glory of Kings, and our true God
for brother. An honour the An-
gels could neuer glorie in; For
when or where (sayes S. Paul)
did God euer say to them as he
sayd to man, speaking to our
Saviour Christ? Thou art my
sonne, to day I haue begotten
thee.

These spirits, as happy as they are

6 An Method to loue

haue neuer an Angel of them al,
inuested with their Angelical na-
ture, they can say is God; whilst
wee inuested with our humane
haue the God of Angels himselve
wee cannot only say is man but
euen our brother too; nor do wee
find it was euer sayd to any of the
as it was to man; Behold thy Mo-
ther, in the person of S. Iohn, who
(according to the Doctours) per-
sonated and stood at the foote of
the Crosse for al mankind, whilst
the Sauour of vs al deliuer'd him
the pretious treasure of his Mo-
ther in trust. Let vs conclude
then, that her loue is generally
towards al; but in a more particu-
lar manner towards those who as-
sume her for their Mother, and by
most affectionat wayes seeke out
her safeguard and protection.

Moreouer

and serue the B.V. Mary. 7

Moreouer wee must conclude this glorious Queen hath shewed more affection to men, then euer shee did to Angels: In imitation of the eternal Father, whom in her actions, shee of al others, most nearly imitats: and for prooffe that his loue is more to vs then them, but consider with what pretious gifts he hath honoured vs, for so the greatnes of the presents giuen by the Iouer to its beloued manifestly declares the greatnes of its affection to it; and what gifts are those the eternal Father hath bestowed on the sonnes of the earth! Let the Angels harke, and the Archangels lend an eare, and al the heauenly Hierarchies remaine astonish't at so wondrous a liberality. Behold the infinit present,

A 4 the

the infinit giſt with God hath
giuē & preſented the world with-
al, neuer to be enough vallued
neuer to be æqualled. God hath ſo
loued the World, as for it he hath
giuen his only ſonne; out of his
exceſſiue loue to free it from the
miſerie in which it was; and what
on the Angels hath he beſtowed
the whiſt? nothing but their eter-
nal beatitud merited (as the Di-
uines hold) by one ſole act of
their Wil; another thing it is, and
of other valuation which he hath
beſtowed on men, to giue his
owne Sonne to ſaue them, then
his giuing the Angels their eter-
nal beatitud ; ſo ſayes S. Bona-
uenture, To giue his only Sonne
for the impieties of men was a
greater matter, then to the merits
of Angels to giue eternal life. Let

and serue the B. V. Mary. 9

vs grant then and freely acknowledge the loue of God & his holy Mother, more splēdidly shinning on men then Angels, since more admirable haue been the effects produced of it, towards them then these, and more obliging to repay them reciprocally againe.

But this is not al, nor doth our gracious Mistris stay heere, to repay affection with affection, but by the transport of her loue shee passes to honour her seruants, sometimes with her visits, sometimes to comfort them with her owne deare presence & her Blessed sonns.

An example of which, amongst an infinitie of others, wee haue in the new reformed Mirrour of Examples, and it is this: There was a yong Virgin some. 14. yea-

A v res

10 *An Method to loue*

res of age, so deuoted to the Mother of God, as shee employed in her seruice almost al her dayes and nights; in which her pious exerciles shee continued for almost seauen yeares space, euer beseeching her deere mistres, & patroneffe io to fauour her, as shee might behold her B. Sonn iust as shee had brought him into the world; vntil atlast one night) and 'tis beleued to haue been Christmas night) retiring her selfe into an Oratorie shee had in her fathers house, & there with prayers and teares iterating her petition, behold sodainly there appeared vnto her the Queene of heauen, accōpanied with Myriads of Angels, who gratiouly reaching her, from her owne armes to hers, her heauenly Infant, sayd: Behold

and serue the B.V. Mary. II

hold heer my dear daughter, what you haue so much desired ; take him, embrace him, and at your pleasure solace you with him; at this the deuout Virgin tooke him in her armes, and embracing and kissing him, vsed al the tender-
nesses à deucut loue could expresse an affection in; when in the heate of her kisses & embraces, the diuine Infant darting a look at her, had been able to haue pierc'd a farr harder hart, the hers asked her if shee loued him? that I do, said shee, and confirmed it with a thousand new blandish-
mets: but how much do you loue mee? more then my body; and how much more? more then my very hart; yet, how much more then that? alasse, said shee, it is impossible to tel you that, let it
fond

ſpeak for mee, and ſo with a profound ſigh ſhee cōcluded the dialogue, and with that her life; her hart burſting in the miſt, vnable to containe ſo much of loue was in it, when (we may piously imagine) the B. Virgin tooke her white ſoule in her armes, & deliuering it into the hands of Angels, they with ſweete and melodious harmonie conducted it to heauen. At ſound of which celeftial muſick, thoſe of the houſe accurring & forceing open the Oratory doore, found the dead corps extended on the ground, and exhaling ſo much ſweetnes, as it ſeemed al the moſt pretious perfumes of the world had gon to the embalming it. Amongſt the reſt, two Fathers of S. Dominicks Order were preſent

and serue the B.V. Mary. 13

sent, who, as they dissected her, to find out the cause of so sudaine & strange a death, perceiued her hart inscribed with these wordes in golden letters · O my Iesus, I loue thee more then my selfe, for hauing Created, redeemed, and adopted mee by thy holy grace. Whereby wee may perceaue, how great was the loue shee bore to the sacred Mother and her Sonne, and how greatly they are aduantage'd by it, who loue them with such tendernes of affection.

I am inuited by this so excellent an Example, to the recital of one other no lesse excellent, taken out of the first part of our Chronicles of S. Francis, one of the most Exemplar patterns of deuotion to the B. Virgin as euer was. This holy Saint in
visiting

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visiting a certaine Conuent somewhat remote, had appointed him for companion one of raw yeares and rawer experience in Religion. They being arriued at their iourneys end, the Saint after some light refection, retired himselfe some-what more early then ordinary to his repose, the better to rise at the accustom'd houre of Mattins with the rest. Meane while his Cōpanion singling out one of the Cōuent of as litle spirit as himself, began with bitter inuectiues to inveigh against the Saint, saying (by way of mockery) that he could eate, drinke, and sleepe with the best of them, and euen to passion seek his owne commodities, the whilst he kept them short enough, and stinted them as he listed; & after
many

and serue the B.V. Mary. 15

many such idle & misbe seeming speeches, resolved at last to watch him narrowly that night; whither he rose at the nocturnal Houres with the rest or no, and so he did. When behold, about the second Vigil of night he might perceauce him rise & take his way towards the adioyning Wood; and following him stil with his obseruation, at last he saw him fall prostrat on the ground directing many a sigh to heauen & many a praier wing'd with the fire of loue vnto the Queene of heauen, beseeching her of the fauour to let him see her B. Sonne iust as he was infanted into the world: scarce had he vtter'd this, when the B. Virgin al enuironed with celestial light appeared vnto him & with incredible sweetnes presented him from
her

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her owne armes with her B. Sonn.
The Saint rauish't with so high a
fauour, and rendring al possible
thanks for it, began to vie kisses &
regards of him, to the emulatioⁿ of
his mouth & eies, whether should
take the more delight in him. This
amorous duel lasted til breake of
day (not only to the exceeding
consolation of the S. himself, but
of that Religious too;) whē being
constrained to restore his pretious
burthen to his Mothers arme agai-
ne, the visiō rauished. At sight ~~of~~
this so diuine a miracle, the poore
imperfect Religious man was so
moued & edified, as he threw him
self presently at S. Francis feet,
beseeching him of forgiuenes for
his fault which he humbly there
confest, and dying afterwards to
his imperfections, became to liue

and serue the B.V. Mary. 17
a perfect Religious man consum-
mat in al vertue and perfection.

From these two examples re-
sults an infallible prooffe of this
first priuiledge, & the B. Virgins
exceeding loue to those who hold
deare her memory, and employ
themselues for her sake in works
of piety, whilst they become each
day more faithful and feruent in
seruing her. And these are those
shee most especially doth regard;
these are those shee most particu-
larly doth protect, neuer abando-
ning them (vnlesse they abandon
her) vntil shee hath happily gui-
ded her to heauen. Al with the
deuout S. Bernard in these few
words doth comprehend: It is im-
possible for you B. Lady to forsake
him, who places his Confidence
in you, since you are the Mother
of

of mercie it selfe. Who would not endeauour then, to the vttermost of his forces, to be deuout to her? who, to gaine the fauour of such a Queene, would not count it honour to seeke out al occasions of seruing her? 'tis no smal one, I grant, to ingratiate ones selfe with an earthly Queen; but with the Queen of heauen 'tis the greatest that can be imagined; an honour not only to be preferred before al the greatnesse of the earth but al wee can receaue from any Saint in heauen. And thus much may suffice for the first Priuiledge.

THE II. PRIVILEGE.

Is that the B Virgin is most liberal, and accustomed to bestow frequent graces & fauours on her seruants.



O V E that is true & perfect (as daily experience teacheth) is neuer satisfied in cherishing the thing beloued, and obliging it by guifts and fauours, euen to dispoile it selfe of al it hath most precious, to giue vnto it. So, Ionathā's loue to Dauid was so great, as the scripture sayes of him: Jonathan loued him as his very soule; he
pluck't

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pluck't off his richer garments & gaue to him; & to paint his freindship forth in more liuely colours it adds : He gaue him euen his sword, his cincture; and his bow. Now if worldly loue hath such force ouer the harts of men, what hath the diuine ouer the harts of the Saints in heauen, especially of the B. Virgin, who excels al men and Saints together in the perfection of loue? Let vs vnanimously saye and acknowledge then, that shee is so affectionat to those who honour her, as shee neuer ceaseth shewing on them the heauenly deaw of the most pretious gifts and richest treasures there; for which reason she is deseruedly stiled by our holy Doctours, the Treasureesse of al the riches in heauen, and dispensatrix

and serue the B.V. Mary. 21

atrix of al the giifts of God: A dignitie to which his diuine Ma- iestie hath exalted her in heauen; an honour to which aboue al his subiects he hath preferred her. The keyes of euerlasting riches are in her hands, the coffers of Paradise ful fraught with diuine treasures are at her command, of which shee is nothing sparing; but liberally giues to al that wil, to al that aske, to al that can pre- tend least right vnto them; shee being most riche and powerful, and her wil equaling her power both in heauen and earth.

To you al power is giuen (sayes the mellifluous Doctor deuoutly discoursing with her): both in heauen and earth, so as you haue ability to do what you wil, and so her selfe auowes how riche she
is

22. *An Method to loue*

is in diuine treasures where shee
sayes: The grace is in mee of al
way and truth, in mee al hope of
vertue and of life. And knowing
how much they import vs, her
selfe inuites vs to demand them
of her: Come to mee al, sayes
shee, who are desirous of mee,
and be replenish't with my gene-
rations. See how ready our ri-
che celestial Mistris is, to make
vs participant of her celestial ri-
ches, and see how much she af-
fects our good, who offers vs so
bountiously those goods and ho-
nours, as are neither beholding
to Time, nor fortune. Why doe
wee tarry then? why are wee
then so slow, why shake wee
not off this dulnes that possesses
vs? doe wee feare perhaps a dis-
dainful repulse from her? a dif-
ficult

and serue the B. V. Mary. 23

ficult accesse? a fastidious regard? ah no, shee is so farr from it, as shee is very sweetnes, meeknes it selfe, and there is nothing, in earth or heauen more affable, more courteous, then shee; as S. Bernard testifies of her, where he sayes. What humane fragilitie is it, that feares to approach & haue accesse to the Virgin Mary, in whom is nothing austere or terrible, but shee is al humanitie, al ful of charitie and curtesie towards al.

Let vs then with the common opinion of Doctors hold for certaine, that whosoever hath, recourse to her in their necessityes, and duly implore her ayde, are neuer by her frustrated of their hopes. O sweet Lady (says the ancient Theophylact) you are a
powerful

powerful protectrix of man; for
O immaculat Virgin, who euer
plac't his hope in you, and was
confounded, or who amongst
men, hath implor'd your clemen-
cie, and been abandoned?

Free then from doubt and assu-
red of the truth, let vs haue re-
course in our necessities to this
most powerful and pittiful Lady,
and make our selues worthy of
those high fauours and preroga-
tiues shee so bountiously rewards
her faithful seruants. Withal shee
is, as wee haue sayd, the Treasu-
resse and dispensatrix of al the
guifts of God; shee is the neck
(sayd S. Hierom) by which our
Saviour who is the head, infuses
into his body the Church al that
spiritual sense and motion, by 'tis
animated and sustained; shee is
the

the Blessed Virgin Mary. 25

the body of the tree by which the
roote imparts life vnto the
boughs, producing flowers, lea-
ues, fruit, and al that in the tree
excels either for ornamēt or vse;
Shee is the Concaue of the foun-
taine which first receaues plenty
of its liuing waters of grace, and
after distributs them to seueral
pipes according to their seueral
capacities. Wherefore S. Bona-
uenture most maturely sayes: it
is wonderful what a collection
there is in the Virgin of al the
pleintines of grace, & how from
thence it is deriued to others, as
from its proper source so aboun-
dantly as S. Bernard affirms, al
the Citizens of heauen, al the
men in the world, al the soules
in Purgatory, nay euen in Hel it-
selfe, do homage to her as to their
B soue.

soueraigne Lady , bowing their knees before her in submissiue & befeeming reuerence. So there is no profession nor estate , but is subordinate to her, especially Religious the glory and richest ornament of the Church , which is euer sheltered vnder the protection of her wings , whose founders haue in particular māner stil been deuout vnto her , by which meanes they haue obtained for them and their spiritual children particular fauours stil.

Who is not astonish't at the admirable loue of that great Patriark Saint Dominick to the B. Virgin from whom next to God, his Order acknowledges a dependency, and to haue receaued al its lustre and conseruation. For what remarkable graces and fauours hath

& serue the B. V. Mary. 27

hath he not receaued by her intercession? Of this loue vnto her seruice, although there were no other prooffe, yet that of the inuention of the Rosary were sufficient.

For how manie thousand sorts may we imagine hath this holy Saint led by this excellent deuotion to the honour and seruice of the Queen of heauen? how many Princes and Monarkes of the world, how many Queens and Ladyes of worth & honour, how many of al sorts and professions, euen whole people and whole worlds, (as witnes the new World Antipodes to ours?) neither can we passe in silence the surpassing affection S. Francis bare to her, which was so great, as he would often in amorous passion com-
B 2 pose

28 *An Method to serue*

pose verses to her praise, and either sing them himsele, or cause them to be sung by his Religious. From whence it came, that he stil obtaine'd whatsoeuer fauour he demanded of Alm: God, for himsele in particular, or his Order in general, by the intercession of this beloued Virgin.

One amongst the rest for its raritie I cannot but recount, and it is one of the greatest and most stupēdious miracles of the world, by which such an infinity of soules haue been deliuered and dayly are from the very torments and paines of Hel it selfe; And this is that great and admirable Indulgence granted at the request of S. Francis by our Sauour Christ in the presence of the B. Virgin

the Blessed Virgin Mary. 29

Virgin and innumerable blessed spirits, to the Church of Assisum commonly cal'd Our Lady of Portiuncula; which by reason al Christendome is so much taken with the deuotion, as also it being ful of rare mysterie and worthy of general notice, we wil breiffly make you the narration of.

S. Francis once feruently praying for the saluation of foules, an Angel appeared to him and summon'd him to the Church, where it said our B. Sauour and his mother, with a world of Angels were expecting him. At this, he ran thither, where, being arriued he saw our B. Sauour seated on the high Altar, in a maiestike seate, accompanied by his Mother, and incircled by multi-

tuds of Angels ; When falling prostrat at his feete, he was soone excited by this comfortable voice of his most gracious Lord: Know, Francis, thy praier is arriued vnto mine eares, and for that I know the affection and sollicitud of you and your Order for the saluation of soules, demand of me what grace you please for their avayle, and I wil grant it you. S. Francis at first all trembling at sight of such a maiestie, by the sweetnes of these words secur'd at last waighing the importance of them, thus answered: O Lord, not but that I am conscious of my great unworthines to obtayne any grace from you, much-lesse so great an one, but that you are pleased to add this to the number of my innume-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 51

numerable obligations besides ; I accept your gracious offer , and humbly beseech of you for the good of euery Christian ; that al who visit this Church , hauing first duely confest and communicat ; may obtaine a plenary pardō and Indulgence of al their sins : And you O glorious Virgin and gracious aduocatrix of euery Christian , I beseech you ioyne your powerful intercession with my Petition for it ; when in concurrency with it , conuerting her selfe towards her B. Sonne she sayd : My deereſt ſonne , whom I once had the honour to beare in this wombe of mine , grant I beseech you this his petition to your faithful seruants , since the saluation of ſoules (then which there is nothing you more esteeme)

B 4 teeme)

teeme) is so much concern'd in it. Grant it to my Temple heer, to your honour and the edification of your holie Church. When his diuine Maiestie casting a gracious eye towards S. Francis there prostrat before his throne, saye vnto him: Francis, though what thou demand'st be much, yet thy desire merits much more, in being so conforme to mine; wherefore I grant thee the Indulgence thou desirest, with this condition that thou haue recourse vnto my so-ueraigne Vicar, who hath the free dispose to bind and loose al heer on earth, and of him demand from mee the grant of it. So the vision vanished; when early the next day S. Francis tooke his journey towards Perugia where Pope Honorius then resided with
the

and serue the B. V. Mary. 33

the Court of Rome; and there humbly kissing his feete he declared how al had past, and the occasion of his comming there. At hearing of which, the Pope granted him a Plenary Indulgence (in manner afore sayd) for one day in the yeare, though as yet what day in the yeare, was vndetermined, it hauing neither been prefixed by his diuine Maiestie nor his Holines, vntil al last vpon this occasion:

S. Francis returned to his Conuent, was once at mid-night in deepe contemplation in his Cel, when the Angel of darknes transform'd in shape and voice appeared to him like an Angel of light, and said: Poore Francis, why are you such a Tirant to your selfe? why wil you destroy nature with
B. v your

your superfluous watchings thus? Do not you know the night was ordain'd for man to rest, and that sleep is the principal stay and support of life? Alasse, you are yet in the April of your yeares, haue a care then of your self & be ruled by me, if not for your owne sake, at least for your Orders, whose safety wholly depēds on yours; you are of a strōg & robustious complexion promising a long life, if you shorten it not by your indiscret austerities, beleeeue it, these extrauagant deuotions are infinitely displeasing to Alm: God, who in al things is most delighted with mediocritie. The Saint hearing this, and by this discovering the malice of the wicked Enemie to delude him by a false suggestiō, suddainly, started vp, and al naked
ran

& serue the B. V. Mary. 35

ran to the adioyning wood, where he so long rowled him self amōg the sharpe thornes & bristly thistles til the bloud issued amaine frō euery part of him; when in mockery of his body, now (said he) had it not been better for you, to haue attended stil to the suffrings of your God, then to suffer this, for attending to the Enemy.

He had no sooner vtter'd this, but instantly behold a cleer light spred it-self ouer al the wood, and chasing darknes thēce; on the one side he saw the ground al icye (for it was in the hart of winter) and on the other close by the thornes (he embrewed in his bloud) the white and red rose freshly springing; whilst the Angels in multitudes made a lane for him from that place vnto the Church, singing

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ing in triumphant manner as he went: Goe, happy Francis, goe where thou art expected by the King and Queen of Heauen; and he knew it was no illusion, by their so miraculously reuesting him a new; then gathering fower and twenty of those Roses mixt of either sort, he went towards the Church treading on riche tapisstry al the way, the Angels (as we said before) making a lane for him on the right hand and on the left; where being arriued, he beheld our Sauour seated & accompanied as in the former apparition; when with al low submission casting him as his feete; Most sacred Maiestie: (sayd hee) before whom both heauen and earth do homage, it pleased your goodnes to grant mee formerly

and serue the B.V. Mary. 37

a plenary Indulgence, in that manner (as I desired it) now my petition is, you would appoint a certaine day for the obtaining of it, and this for your most deare and gracious Mothers sake : Our B. Sauour thus answered him. Francis, thy deserts are such I can deny thee nothing, wherfore I grant thee thy petition, and appoint the first of August to be it; then the Saint rendring him all possible thanks replied; but how, O Lord, shal this bee divulged vnto the world, or on whose faith wil they take on trust so great a miracle : For that (said our Bl. Sauour) be it my care to prouide, in the meane while haue you recourse againe to my Vicar heer on earth, carrying with you eye-witnesses of this apparition one of your
brothers.

brothers with some of those Roses you haue gathered there, and feare not, you shal see your desires accomplished. In this amiable sweet, and admirable manner was granted to Holy S. Francis the famous Indulgence of our Lady of Portiuncula, by the so-ueraigne Monarch of Heauen and earth, a grace so great, a fauour so sublime, as neuer was heard of, neuer mortal man receaued the like. By which, and the fore mentioned Institution of the Rosary by the great Patriarch Saint Dominick, wherby his Order hath been so much ennobled, may cleerly be perceiued, how extraordinarily this bountious Ladye recompences them, who serue her affectionally and faithfully.

THE

THE III. PRIVILEGE.

*Howv the B. Virgin helps
and Comforts her faithful
servants, in their afflic-
tions.*



THE third Priuiledge
this heauenly Lady
honors her fauourits
which is: neuer to be
wanting to them in
their afflictions, a thing which
peither ought nor can be doubted
of. For if she loues them, and if
she loues by effects to shew it,
what greater effects of it, then in
their most necessitous times to
reteine

40 *An Method to loue*

receiue and succour them , or when is the tyme to declare ones loue and affection , if not then? A true frende loues at al tymes (sayth the holy Ghost) and a brother is tried in affliction; and can wee thinke any in heauen or earth more true to those she loues then the B. Virgin is ? or that in her affection she serues the times, & loues not so wel in pouerty as in riches , in sadnes as in mirth , in aduersity as in prosperity ? Oh, no, A true freind alwayes loues, but especially in time of affliction, for that is the touch stone of true freindship indeed , and then she shews hers most. What a happines , what a felicity is it then, for those who loue & serue her faithfully to haue so powerful a freind as she who when the
 burthen

and serue the B.V. Mary 41

burthen of misery lies heauiest
on vs can lighten vs , when we
are deseruing more of pittie then
of loue , out of pittie loues vs
more ; and who lastly in the dark
passage of death, where so many
leese their way , leads vs safely
out of it, and not forsakes vs then,
when al the world besides forsa-
kes vs , but comforts vs on our
death-beds , when al in this life
turnes to our more discomfort
which we did most affect ; and
stands vnto vs , when whole le-
gions of diuels are beseidging our
souls , sheilding vs from euery
harne , now defending vs from
impatience by assuaging our
griefes, or fortyfijng our mindes
against it , now from sorrow,
with the ioy she brings vs , now
from despaire with the assured
hope

A Method to loue
 hope of our saluation, and finally
 with a new re-inforcement of
 Angels puts al our Infernal ene-
 mies to flight.

The glorious S. Antony of Pa-
 dua (as is recorded in his life)
 when he was assalted with any
 temptation, vs'd no other weapon
 then to repeate this Hymne of
 hers: *O gloriosa Domina, &c.* when
 presently he should come off with
 victory. As it happened one day
 when being at his prayers, the
 diuel (at defiance stil with al good
 workes) set so furiously on him,
 and strayn'd his throat so cruel
 hard, as he had almost strangled
 him, til the Saint hauing recourse
 to his accustomed armes, inforc't
 him to leese his hold. In like
 manner al the article of his death
 being prepar'd vnto it before
 with

and serue the B.V. Mary. 43

with al the sacraments, and saying
with his brethren the seuen peni-
tential Psalmes, he concluded al
Deuotions with that, to which
he was euer so deuout: *O gloriosa
Domina, &c.* when behold, the B.
Virgin appeared vnto him, infi-
nitly cōforting him with her ap-
parition, and adding to the Con-
solation of it, the sight of her
deare sonne and his deare Lord;
at which with incredible ioy he
deliuered his soule into his Bl.
hands. Go reade al histories,
search into al records, see if you
can find any that euer trusted her
with their confidence, and were
deceau'd; who inuoked; her in
their necessities and were not re-
leiued by her? so as we may wel
applye those words of the Wise
man to her, and say: Behold al
ye

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yee nations of men and Know, that none hath plac't their trust in this foueraine Lady; & been Cō-founded. And could we but see rising from their sepulchers al those who haue been deuoted to her and could Demand of them where euer she had fayld' them at their need or no? Infalibly they would al with one accord say with S. Bernard cōuerting themselues towards her. Let him be silent O Bl. Virgin, who can say you wer euer wanting to them when they inuoked you in their necessityes.

We wil add another Example taken out of *Scala celi*, of a high miraculous straine, exemplifying this priuiledge to the life, and so conclude it.

A certaine Matron of excellent endowments, and much deuo-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 45

deuoted to the Queene of hea-
uen, sending her sonne to serue
a certaine Prince, in whose ser-
uice his father had spent his life,
charg'd him before he went by al
the tyes by which Heauen and na-
ture had obliged him to her, to
be deuout vnto the B. Virgin, in
al his necessities to implore her
ayde, and neuer omit dayly, at
least to say vnto her honour an
Aue Maria, with that short pra-
yer : O B. Virgin, bee propi-
tious to me at the houre of death
This he faithfully promised, and
being at Court inuiolably obser-
ued, though for the rest, Youth
easily falling into disorder, and
the Court being a place most slip-
pery, this yong Gentleman fre-
quenting the societies of some
deboished ones, soone tooke the
taint

taint of their societies, and became as deboish't as they; and (as there is no stay in wickednes when one is falling once) at last he was so deeply plunged in it, as the Prince when no admonition would serue the turne first banish't him his presence then his Court, and last of al his territory. Impatient for this disgrace; and conuerting that was intended for his cure, vnto his great maladie, what did this desperat youth but associat himselfe with certaine theeues, who harbouring in the woods infested al the Prouinces about, and was soone chosen their Captain; when hauing a more spacious feild to exercise his wickednes in, he soone became so ingeniously fierce, so wittily cruel, as in fiercenes and
cruelty

and serue the B.V. Mary. 47

cruelty he excelled them al, sparing no humane creature, and no sort of inhumanity. But see Heavens iustice, which comes with the greater force vpon vs, the greater turne it makes ear it comes at vs. He raigned some yea- res thus, in his wickednes, til at last it was his fortune to be taken and deliuered vp bound hand and foot to the publick Magistrate by them to prison, where the same day he was condemned to die; of this hauing secret intelligence; (strait as if the maske of his wickednes were but then taken off) he began to perceauē the vglines of it, so as to detest it, be wayle and curse his fortune, and euen waxe desperat for the greefe and shame it had brought vpon himself and his family. When behold while
he

48 *An Method to loue*

he was in this dispose of minde,
there entred dungeon a man
of mightie stature and hor-
rible aspect, who addressing
himselſe vnto him, Offered, if
he would be ru'd by him, to
free him thence; and who are
you (ſayd he) almost freed by
his promiſe from the feare of his
apparance, I am the diuel (ſayd
he) ſent hither by my Prince to
deliuer you; obey but his com-
mands; at hearing this, without
any long delay, the priſoner (as
it is ordinary with wicked men,
to preferr the ſafety of their
bodyes before their ſoules,) an-
ſwered; What-ſo'ere you are, you
wil oblige me by ſo great a be-
nefit to what ſoeuer you demand;
then firſt (ſaid the diuel) you
muſt renounce Ieſus Chriſt, his
merits

and serue the B.V. Mary. 49

merits; and al the principality he hath ouer you; I doe (sayd he) and it suffices to haue found a Prince of your Maister so ready, to pleasure me; next you must renounce al the Sacraments & communion with his Church: and that too, answered he. Then to Mary his mother, and al your hope of fauour and assistance from her; at this he demurr'd, and entring into himself call'd al his thoughts together in consult of what he had promised his Mother, & what he had performed til then; when resolved at last he answered? that he would neuer doe, farr be it from me (sayd he) how neere soeuer my life be cōcern'd in it, to offer such an affront to my deare Patronesse, and so to iniure her who so hath obliged me: No, rather I

C offer

50 *A Method to loue*

offer her my self (if she daine to accept it) whether she would haue me liue or die , to be wholly and absolutly at her dispose. Confounded with this his resolution, the diuel vanished , when he touched vnto the quick with a repentance for his hainous offences against his Lord & Sauour, at first began to weep & sigh most bitterly, then had his recourse to the ordinary refuge of sinners the Mother of God saying vnto her with a sobbing voice, a thousand times interrupted by his greefe: O most sacred Mother of mercy, haue pity on me miserable sinner, and do not quite reiect me from before your sight; I aske not of you deliuerance from my bonds, I beg not of you to saue my life, for that considering the heinoufnes of my crimes) were too much for me to as-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 51
ke and you to grant; I only hūbly
craue you would obtaine for me
pardō of my sinns of your B. Sōn,
and assist me as I haue often pe-
titioned you at the houre of my
death: in this sorrowful and de-
uout manner he past al night, and
the day was no sooner come, but
he sent for a Confessours and
confest him of al his sinnes; this
done, he was led forth to execu-
tion; the poore soule vpon his
way euer calling vpon the Blef-
fed Virgin his Patronesse to assist
him at that time of neede; On the
way it was his chance to passe by
a litle Chappel, where was ere-
cted a statue of our B. Lady, which
he beholding vehemently cried
out sighing in most dolorous mā-
ner: O thou hope of sinners help
me; the Image at this aduanc't a
C 2 litle

52 *A Method to loue*

litle, and in sight of al the people fauourably beckened vnto him with the head; which he perceiuing besought the Magistrate he might be suffred to approach vnto it, and kisse its feete in thankfulness for so great a fauour; which being graunted him behold iust as he bowed downe to kisse its feete, the Image laid hold of him, and held his arme so fast as al the force the Officers vsed could not take him thence, the people beholding so great a miracle, presently al cried out, a pardon, a pardon, & deliuered him whether the Magistrate would or no; in presence of whom he made the full relation of al his passed life, praying and glorifying God in his B. Mother for it, whence returned into his Countrey, he became

and serue the B.V. Mary. 33

came so reformed a man, as he became as remarkable afterwards for goodnes and vertue, as he had been before for vice and wickednes.

From this History we may vnderstand, that the Mother of God is neuer wanting to her seruants in their necessities, that she is our refuge, our safegard, our comfort, & remedy of al our paines, grieues and afflictions; for which reason S. German Patriarch of Constantinoble vses these words speaking vnto her : There is none saued without you (sayes he) O Blessed Virgin, none deliuered from their greeuāces but by you, none but by your mediation receaues any giift from God, none but at your suite obtaynes forgiuenes of their sinnes; O Virgin worthy of

C 3 al

54 *A Method to loue*

al glory and praise, who next to your sonne takes such an especial care of humane kind, as you; who defends them more affectionately then you? who succours them more readily then you, when they are assailed by temptations? who extenuats their faults with greater charitie? excuses them to God, and exempts them from punishment due to their offences.

Wherefore (in continuation of his discourse) sayes this holy Patriarch; Let the afflicted haue recourse to you, let those who are lost vpon the Sea of this worlds misery in danger to be wrack't, looke towards you as to their Pole-starr, that shal' safely direct you to their Port. Thus this pious Saint; By which, and that which
hath

and serue the B. V. Mary. 55
hath been sayd before, this third
Priuiledge is enough illustrated
which the deuout seruants of the
B. Virgin haue. Let vs passe vnto
the fourth.

THE IV. PRIVILEGE.

*Of the deuoted to the B Vir-
gin, which is to haue her
in Heauen for their assu-
red Advocate.*



CERTAINLY it is
a great comfort for
poore Widowes and
Orphans, and such
afflicted soules, when
their busines lies at Court on
which depends the safety of their
liues

liues or estates, to be assured of the fauour of some great one who hath the Princes eare; but if the Queene her selfe should take their affayre so to hart, as to employ her whole authority therein, an vnspeakeable comfort would it be to the? Now how much more cause of Comfort haue we poore despicable creatures, Knowing we haue in heauen for Aduocate to Alm: God the Queene of Heauen her selfe, who defends our causes, vndertakes our protections, procures faithfully our saluations, and omits no diligēce in fine to render our soueraine Iudge propitious vnto vs. O assured hope, miserable sinners haue in such an Aduocate with Alm: God, so as the Church stiles her in her Antiphon *Eia ergo*

and serue the B.V. Mary. 57

ergo aduocata nostra &c. who ha-
uing in her hands the mannage of
our affayres, we cannot but she
wil expedite al to our aduantage,
which made the elegant Cassian
Say: Al the helpe of human-Kind
Consists in the multitud of the
fauours and graces of the Blessed
Mary.

The holy Church to our no-
smal cōforts with suffrage of the
common opinion of Saints, attri-
buts to the B. Virgin certaine E-
pithets of honour in expression of
the good offices she doth vs, cal-
līg her Mother of sinners, Mother
of mercy, the vniuersal hope and
refuge of al, Aduocatrix of mor-
tals, as also Redemptrix, Pacifier,
and Mediatrix betwixt God and
man. Nor needs there any other
prooffe then experience it selfe,

C v

how

how much al sorts and conditions of Christians are deuoted to her; the Pilgrims cal her their Mother, the Pupils their Tutrix, the sick their Phisician, the sea-faring men their hauen, the Culpable their Aduocate, the Trauaylers their Guide, the Captaines their deliuerer, the forsakē their refuge, the desperats their Hope, the afflicted their Comfort, the oppressed their Releife; In fine, al the world acknowledges her, and cals her the only Refuge of the miserable, and the aime to which al Christian people commonly direct their vowes and ardentest desires; knowing for certaine she can do al she wil, and she wil doe nothing but what may be best for vs.

For which reason al sorts haue
recourse

and serue the B.V. Mary. 59

recourse to her as to their cheife
treasure in Heauen, the source
whence al their graces spring, &
the gate at which they neuer
knock in vayne; In so much as
from the middest of the vastest
wildernes, from the bottome of
the deepest sea, from the iawes of
death, seru'd vpon the earth bed
to it, to be deuoured, from exe-
cution and the very stroke of
the hangmans hands, she hath
deliuered al those who haue ducly
inuoked her, and miraculously
feed them from the dangers they
were in; so sure and gracious a
freind she is at need to the affli-
cted and distrest.

Soe she incessantly makes suite
and instance for vs, at that great
Tribunal, where her B. sonne
presides as soueraine Iudge for it
(as

(as S. Bernard sayes) these three requisit parts of a good Aduocate First, a great repute in the Court she pleades in; and the fauour of the Prince or Iudge; next the sufficiencie to plead; and lastly such an affection to the cause she vndertakes, to goe through with it what ere it cost.

Now to declare vnto the ful, the B. Virgins authority with her sonne, not Only exceeds my capacitie; but the capacities of all men and Angels. Wherefore let it suffice to say (least in offering at more we should incurr but the repute of presumption) that she is Mother of God; from whence by Consequence we may gather that she is of vnlimited power with him, and that the least intimation of her desire carryes with it

and serue the B. V. Mary. 61

it (as I may saye) the force of a
Command. And so the holye
Church desires no more of her
but , *Monstra te esse matrem* ; shew
thy selfe a Mother ; And in ano-
ther prayer we saye : Grant he
may eare our prayers , who Was
borne for vs , and daigned to be
thine. So in our ordinary litanies
we supplicats her thrice to inter-
cede for vs , as one who hath more
power and authority , with the
Blessed Trinity , then al the other
saints. S. Gregory of Nicomedia
in his Sermons to her prayse ,
cals her Omnipotent in her aduo-
cation ; And S. Peter Damian ad-
dressing his speech to her ; It ma-
nifestly appeares (sayes he) O
B. Lady ; *Quod Dominus fecit tibi
magna* : how great things God
hath done for you in giuing you
al.

al Power in this world and the next, euen to be able to afford the most desperat a ful assurance of their saluation; for the Omnipotent taking flesh of you, how can you be lesse then omnipotent with him? and in continuation of his discourse he sayes; you approch, O Powerful Lady, to the Altar of our humane reconciliation, not in suppliant wise as do the other Saints, but with the authority of a Mother to a sonne, which is but to aske and haue.

Touching the second Condition of her Capacity of the charge in rightly vnderstanding our necessityes, besides that she is stiled the Mother of mercy and our Aduocat, both, which

& serue the B.V. Mary. 63

which suppose her abilities for it, this example may suffice out of the Chronicles of the Friers Preachers, whose Order in a special manner is deuoted vnto her.

In the Citty of Marcell there was a deuout Virgin endow'd with al Saintly vertues: who on a certaine day being present at Compline in the Church of the Dominicans, while they were singing the accustomed Antiphon, *Salve Regina*, was rauished in extasy, during which she sawe fower things of singular remarke: The first, that when they pronounced these wordes: *Spes nostra salue*; haile our hope; the Blessed Virgin with a gracious Countenance

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tenance returned them their salutation : The second, that at these word; *Eia ergo aduocata nostra*: O therfore thou our Aduocate with a lowly inclination to her B. Sonne she seemed to intercede for them: The third, that at these wordes : *Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos Conuerte*: Behold vs with those merciful eyes of thine : she cast vpon them a most deare and sweet regard : And the fourth these words : *Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui nobis post hoc exilium ostende* : and shew vs hereafter Iesus the blessed fruit of your wombe : she by turnes presented him there present in her armes to al the Religious : This vision, returning from her extasy, she declared to her Confessor, a man both holy, learned, and discreet,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 63
creeet, with great feeling of deuotion and tendernes. Which example may moue vs, often to haue recourse vnto this our heavenly Aduocate, supplicating her by this deuout Antiphon of hers, in which she seemes to take soe much delight and complacence.

The third Condition, requisit in a good Aduocate, is faithfully to acquit them of their charge; & it is impossible for vs to comprehend, how faithfully and carefully the Mother of God negotiats for vs our affaires in heauen, or to conceaue the admirable effects thereof. So as shee hath all these requisite parts of a good Aduocate. Mary wāts not power (sayes the deuout S. Bernard) nor right addresse to obtaine what shee Petitions for; for she
is

is the Mother of Wisdome ; nor
the will to employ her self to the
vttermost in our affaires , for she
is the Mother of mercy. To which
last, in being our Aduocat, she is
(in manner) bound ; For so the
Iurists hold they are bound, faith-
fully to negotiat the cause they
vndertake. Besides being so good
as she is, & so affectionat towards
vs, how is it possible shee should
not take to hart an affaire of such
consequence as is that of our sal-
uation ; and aboue al, being our
Mother too , as wel as his , to w-
hom she interceds for vs : a strāge
circumstance that she should be
both Mother of the King, and sui-
ter, of the Iudge and Criminal, of
God and Man ; which must needs
render her much concern'd in the
affaire to make an attonement be-
twixt

and serue the B.V. Mary. 67

twixt God and vs; and (as S. Bernard, sayes) be euen impatient til she haue performed it. In being our Aduocat then we must suppose her incessantly pacifying her sonns anger towards vs, and mediating a reconcilement for al those, who haue recourse vnto her and implore her assistance: which may be clearly perceaued from this following Example recorded by Iohn Grithi of the Order of the Minorits.

There was (sayes he) a souldier, a man of most wicked life, and violater of al things sacred and prophane: whose wife not withstanding (a holy and pious woman) had obtain'd of him, by solemne vowe to fast in honour of the B. Virgin euery Saturday, & (saye an *Aue Mary* as ofte as he beheld

beheld her picture: which he did,
nor euer omitted to doe. One day,
(more to a voyd the vehement
heat abroad, then for any heate
of deuotion he had within) he
entred the Church: where behol-
ding an Image of the B. Virgin,
he began to doe as he was accusto-
med. When behold, he had an
apparition of our B. Lady on the
Altar holding in her armes her
B. sonne al couered ouer with
wounds and the abundance of
bloud that issued out of them:
Moued to pittie at the sight of so
pittiful a spectacle, the Souldier
(diuinely inspired) drew nee-
rer, and had the boldnes to aske
our B. Lady who had so wounded
her B. sonne ? Thou, and suche
sinners as thy selfe, (replied
she with an angry countenance)
who

and serue the B.V Mary. 69

who exercise more cruelty on him with your daylye crimes, then euer the barbarous Iewes who crucified him. These words struck the Soldyer into so liuely repentance for his sinnes, as he replyed with a sorrowful hart & weeping eyes: O B. Ladye, it is true indeed, I haue been as great a sinner as you affirme; yet do but obtaine for me of your B. sonne a ful pardon and remission of what is past, and I heer vow vnto you to be as obsequious hereafter to him, as I haue been rebellious heretofore,

No, sayd the B. Virgin, I am resolved to heare you no more, nor be any more deceiued by you; for whilstt you sinners call me the Mother of mercy, you make me with your sinnes the Mother of al greef
and

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nor euer omitted to doe. One day,
(more to a voyd the vehement
heat abroad, then for any heate
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entred the Church: where behol-
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he began to doe as he was accusto-
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and serue the B.V. Mary. 69

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and

and affliction : Oh B. Lady (sayd he) be not so inexorable I beseech you to my prayers, but remember you are the Aduocat of sinners, and haue (in a manner) contracted by it , an obligation to intercede for them , and consequently for me the most greuous of them al , and most needing your intercession : Heer the B. Virgin moued to pittie with his words, cast a pittiful eye towards her sonne & sayd : Pardon then I beseech you, O my sonne , this poore sinner who so humbly petitions you ; no, sayd the sacred Infant , his offences are too great to be forgiuen ; but she persisting stil to coniure him by al the charmes she thought most powerful to moue him ; at last seeing his anger so resolutely bent nothing would moue it , she
arose

and serue the B.V. Mary. 71

arose and placing him on the Altar went downe ready to cast her selfe vpon her knees before him; which when her B. Sonne beheld, suspecting her intention, he ask't her what she meant to doe? why, saye she, to cast my selfe heer prostrate at your feete, and neuer rise til you haue granted me my petition; O mother, say the tēder Infant, you know the force your wil hath with mine; For your sake, I pardō this wicked wretche and in lieu of satisfaction admit him, to kisse my wounde; encouraged al this by the B. Virgin, the soldier drew neere, and whilst with incredible Consolation, he kist wound after wound behold, vnder the touch of his mouth they al heald vpp. The B. Infant thus recouering, the vision vanished


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nished, when the soldier presently hauing home; distributed al his goods vnto the poore, and then by common consent, he and his wife separated, and entred into Religion. O happy soules the while, and happy Conuer-
sion which I would to God al sin-
ners would imitate. To cunclude
then, since we haue so powerful
an Aduocate in heauen of the B.
Virgin; let vs make no delay but
preferr our supplications to her,
expose our necessityes, and peti-
tion her for a redresse of them;
the meane while, more to inte-
rest her in our affaires, let vs be
assiduous in honouring her, and
ingenious in finding out the way
to do it best, omitting neither
day nor night to salute her with
humble reuerence, alwayes re-
membring

& serue the B. V. Mary. 73
membring that a litle of feruor-
ous deuotion is better then a
great deale negligently perfor-
med.

THE V. PRIVILEGE.

*How the Mother of God sa-
ues her deuout seruants,
and renders them worthy
of eternal life.*

 HE glorious Queen
of Heauen is not cō-
tented yet, to che-
rish her seruants af-
ter a deare manner,
to enoble them with singular pre-
rogatiues, to succour them in their
D neces-

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necessities, and espouse the care of their affaires; but with al she deli-
 uers them with her prayers from
 merited punishment, and directs
 them vnto heauen; which soue-
 raigne fauours ought to oblige vs
 perpetually to serue her, especial-
 ly this last which I esteeme the
 principal'st of al, and worthiest of
 greatest admiration, in that ac-
 cording to the common opinion
 of Doctours, 'tis in a manner im-
 possible, that any one should be
 damned who liues & dies deuote
 vnto her, be they neuer so farre
 gone in wickednes, but they reco-
 uer at last, and through the mercy
 of God (as we haue a daily expe-
 rience) make a happy end. Now
 if any obiect, that this cannot be
 without a præuius dispose of
 Grace and a sufficient sorrow for
 their

and serue the B. V. Mary. 75

their finnes; I anſweer, it is true, but this the incessant prayers of the B. Virgin obtaineth for them too, whose power is so great with her B. Sonne, as by vertue of that, she obtaines for them a perfect Contrition, and entire remission of their sins. And this, the deuout S. Ambrose in these words affirmes: O B. Mary, sayes he, you embrace with a maternal affection the poore sinner despised by al the World, and neuer forsake him til God pacified by your prayers hath receaued him vnto Grace.

Let vs Confirme this verity by the example of a common Curtezen conuerted by the intercession of our B. Lady. We reade in the great Marial, of a lewd woman wholly abandoned to vice

D 2 and

and licentiousnes; who not with standing neuer omitted dayly seauen times to bow downe in reuerence of the B. Virgin, and to say an *Aue Maria* in honour of her; Now amongst her frequent prostitutions, it happened one of principal quality haunted her company, whose wife being a vertuous Lady and one singularly deuoted to the Queene of Heauen; did beare her husbands ill demeanour so impatiently, as one day prostrating her selfe before an Image of the B. Virgin she sayd: O most soueraine Lady, mirrour of al purity, how can you suffer this, to see one so shamefully abused, and an impudent woman thus glory in my iniury? I beseech you punish her so exemplarly, that she may be a terrible

and serue the B. V. Mary. 77

rible warning hereafter for al the rest ; Grant this request O so- ueraine Lady , if not vnto the de- seruing of my prayers, and heate of my seruices, Yet at least to the pittie of my Cause , and the into- lerables of my iniurye. When behold a wonder, the Image thus answered her ; deare seruant, it is impossible for me to satisfie your desire, I know your wrongs and the iust cause you haue to be offended at them ; but know whit- al , she is so deuout to me , in midst of al her wickednes, as I cannot proceed against her as you desire ; only this I wil doe , for your comfort , I wil petition my Sonne for her , that he would turne her hart , and that she may turne vnto amendment ; which was done , for within few dayes

D 3 after

after there happened a miraculous Change in both the Adulterers; both he and she reforming of their liues, and living chastly & exemplarly euer after.

And is not this a rare priuiledge then, of those deuoted to the Queene of Heauen, that let them be neuer so deeply plunged in the abyffe of sins, yet she can deliuer them thence? I cal it a priuiledge, since for their particular deuotion to the Queene of Heauen they are particularly exempted from the law of other finners.

This affectionat deuotion besides to the B. Virgin is a probable and experimented signe of predestination, I say only a probable one, because 'tis true, none knowes whether they be worthy of
loue

and serue the B.V. Mary. 79
loue or hate, and an infallible one
in this life there is none.

With what contented harts
then should we liue, did we but
exercise our selues, in good
works and frequent acts of deu-
tion towards the B. Virgin? and
what hope of eternal felicity
should our minds be rayfed vnto
free from al those doubts and
feares of their saluation, which
those who walke not in the way
of God and the seruice of his B.
Mother, doe meet withal so often?
And from hence proceeded the
firme Confidence of Saints,
grounded on the knowledge they
had of the excessiue liberality &
promises of Alm; God, to Con-
quer as it were the Kingdome of
heauen by the force of Christs
merits and their owne coopera-
D 4 tions,

tions, by which they were so encouraged in the midst of their most greuous sufferances, as nothing could daunt or discourage them.

S. Bernard in his sermons on Septuagesima sayd, that although 'tis true no man knowes for certaine whether he be in the grace of God or no, since in this life no man hath an infallible knowledge of his saluation; Yet (sayes he,) (and 'tis a saying of vnspeakable comfort those who are perseuerant in good) we are not to be disanimated, nor giue ouer the working of our saluation with an anxious feare, since we haue for our comfort a hope of it arising from so many euident signes of it, as it seldome or neuer deceiues our trust. Heare himself: le'ts
neuer

& serue the B. V. Mary. 81

neuer trouble our selues (says he) with any such doubt as this, for we haue such certaine markes & manifest arguments of our saluation, as in those who haue them, there is no doubt at al.

The Example of S. Hilarion comes wel to the Confirmation of this; drawing towards his end, and being affrighted with the apprehensions of death in this manner encouraged himself; Go out my soule, said he, What fearest thou? 'tis seauenty yeares since thou begon'st to serue thy God, and now art a feard of death? Behold what an assurance and firme hope of saluation a vertuous life can giue to the seruants of God, and how cleere and euident the markes are of eternal saluation to those who liue vertuously. Let

D v euery

euery Christian then endeauour to liue so, and he shal feele in himselfe the contentment of this security, which is so great, as it exceeds al the other Contentments we can haue in this mortal life. Which S. Francis wel experienced, when hauing had a reuelation, how he was predestinated to be saued, through excessive ioy for a long tyme he could vtter nothing else, but Blessed be God, blessed be God. And if these signes of Predestination are to be seene in any, in a most particular manner are they to be seene in those who are deuoted to the B. Virgin; which from this following Example wilbe made manifest.

S. Anselme in his booke of the miracles of our B. Lady, recounts
this

and serue the B. V. Mary. 83

this story : how the Diuel (who
out of his inueterat hate to man,
seekes al meanes possible to ruine
him) once putt himselfe in ser-
uice to a noble man, hauing first
taken on him a humane shape;
whose humour he knew so wel to
comply withal, as in short space
he had al the care of his family
committed to his charge ; and
pursuing the aduantage he had
ouer his wil and his affections, he
was still suggesting some mis-
cheife or other to him, now coun-
seling him to wrong this man,
now to murther that , so as no
day past in which he made him
not guilty of some notable wic-
kednes ; now it hapned one day,
this noble-man walking in his
woods accompanied with his
crew of ruffians, encountred with

a :

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a certaine holy Preist, whom he violently layd hands on and carryed prisoner to his Castle; at night the Priest signified to him he had a secret to impart vnto him, in which he was much concern'd, but it must be in presence of al his seruants; the noble-man with a longing desire to know what it was, assembled them al together except this diuel, who retired himself, and tooke for an excuse some indisposition of health: the Preist by diuine reuelation knowing the craft of the wicked enemy, told the noble-man his presence was so necessary among the rest, as without it, there could be nothing done. How would you haue him come answer'd the noble-man, since you heare them say he cannot stand

and serue the B.V. Mary. 85
stand on his legs he is so ill? All's
one for that, replied the Preist
again, some meanes must be
found out to bring him heer.
The noble-man seeing him so re-
solut, commaunded two of his
seruants notwithstanding al his
excuses to see him brought, which
was don, and he came counterfai-
ting the sickman vnto the life;
when the holy-man before them
al, Coniured him presently in the
name of Alm. God to declare who
he was, and to what end he had
put himself in seruice to that no-
ble-man? At this, the diuel ca-
sting toward him such a looke,
was able to make tremble the bol-
dest there, answered plainly he
was the diuel, and his end of ser-
uing his Maister was, to procure
his destruction which he had long
since

since effected, had not the B. Virgin interpos'd her self: & wherefore, sayd the Priest? why only for a certaine custome this wicked wretch had (sayd he) dayly to salute her humbly on his knees seauen times both morning and euening, and as oft reherse in her honour the Angelical salutation. Which if I could haue once perswaded him to omit, as I endeavored often, I had presently killed him, and taken his soule to hel, and hauing vttered this in shooting himself like lightning out of the roome, he presently dis-appeared, with his hideous roaring leauing them al in horrible affright, of which the holy man taking his aduantage, exhorted them al to penance and bitter life, and especially the noble-
man,

and serue the B V. Mary. 87

man, with whom he prevayled so much, as he wholly conuerted him and made him as exemplar in goodnes, as he had been in wickednes.

By this example we see this Priuiledge, and the exceeding value of this interiour and exteriour reuerence exhibited vnto the Queene of Heauen. And if this hapned vnto one so wicked a man as he, how much more special care wil she haue of al those, who serue her in holines and purity of life? with what a Deare tendernes wil she vnder, take the protection of those? and what a watchful eye wil shee haue to defend them from the assaults of the Enemy?

Let vs then conclude this holy and profitable exercise with our
duly

duly honouring the B. Virgin both with exterior and interior reuerence affered vpp with al becoming obsequiousnes ; so shal we ingratiate our selues , with our most deare and bountious Lady , by whose meanes we shal obtaine that quiet and repose of hart , which is to be preferred before al worldly things.





*The Conditions requisit in
a seruant of the B. Virgin,
and first of Humility.*



S those who are enttain'd in seruice of any earthly Prince to obtaine their fauours, endeavour to appeare endowed with al those vertuous parts and qualityes by which they are taken most : so those who would be fauoured by the Queene of Heauen, must whilst they serue her, endeavour to be qualified with those vertues she is cheifly delighted in; which
are

are principally those she exercised her self in, whilst she was conuersant in this mortal life, as namely *Humility, Corporal chastity, and purity of hart*, to which we may add our diligent frequenting and receauing the Sacraments, the only meanes to conserue vs in internal purity and to begin with humility, which is the foundation of al other vertues.

It is certaine, no other vertue was more perspicuous in her then that of humility, though she had al the rest in their highest exaltation; and this appeares by the account which she made of it, testified by these words of hers: *Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmayerd: therefore al generations shal call me blessed: as much*

& serve the B. V. Mary. 91

much as to say; that God only in regard of the lowlines of her humility, had elected her to that high dignity, of being his Mother. And if to be humble of hart (according to S. Dorotheus) is to account abiectly of ones selfe and preferre al before them, of what excellency was this vertue in the B. Virgin, who from those words of her, *Because he hath beheld the humility of his handmaide;* we may suppose (as F. Arias well obserues) she had so humble an opinion of her selfe, as she reputed her selfe of al other creatures the most contemptible.

This vertue then shining so resplendantly in her, we may suppose to haue been that, most took the eyes of her B. Sonne, & made him soonest chose her for Mother,
as

as a sonne in this world if it lay in his choice would soonest make electiō of her for mother, whom he sawe endued with those graces and qualities which were most in account with vs; and this seemes to be inferred by these words of the text: For he hath beheld the humility of his handmayd; and as if she would say; the sonne of his heauenly Father hath cast a fauourable eye on me his humble seruante, and thought me worthy of his loue; not because I am nobly borne, wise, prudent, conuersant in the scriptures, and the like; not for any beauty or corporal perfection, but only because of my humility. For so although al her other vertues were most exceeding grateful to Alm. God, yet that of her humility was
most

And serue the B.V. Mary. 93

most of al, it being as it were the foundation of al the rest. In so much as according to Lyr's interpretatiō, it was in her the principal disposition to the conceiuing of the sonn of God; & so says S. Hierom. God was rather moued to be incarnat in her womb by her humility then another vertue else. In this vertue it was (as S. Mechtild vnderstood by reuelation) she so exercised her self and laboured so carefully, as she attained the height & perfection of it; by this she came to so absolute a knowledge of her self; by this she would lessen her own proportion cōpared either vnto God or man. And disclaiming wholly from her owne deserts; by this she came to attribute al the fauours she receiued to the sole benignity of Alm. God

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God, and rendred him thanks for them accordingly; by this in fine she came neuer to vtter word in her owne prayse, or to giue willing eare to others praises, neuer to take vain-glory in any thing, but to attribut al the glory to Alm: God, incessantly magnifying and praising him, with rendring him infinity of thanks for his great fauours towards her; and so she begins her Canticle; *My soule doth magnifie our Lord, and my spirit exults in God my Saviour.* And to the model of this excellent vertue of hers, are al her deuout seruants to conforme their actiōs, and expresse the portraiture of it in their soules; when how grateful wil thy appeare in the eyes of this glorious Queene, when they present themselues before her in
this

and serue the B. V. Mary. 9

this riche equipage. Certainly there is none hath any vnderstanding or discourse in him, that wil not humble himselfe vnto the ground and thinke him the most abiect of al other things ; who shal but consider how profoundly humble the B. Virgin was euen in that exalted state of hers of being Mother of God, more holy then the Angels, and more pure then the very sun-beames themselves. And who considering his owne vilenes and extraction only from a litle earth, his being subiect to such a world of faults and imperfections, his becoming through sinne enimie to God, and companion of the diuel, wil not in imitation of the B. Virgin cast themselves into the bottome of humility, from the topp of pride
and

and presumption, whereon they stand

A great and neere Imitator of this humility of hers, was her great seruant S. Francis, who was ambitious of nothing so much on earth, as to be accounted the most abiect of al his brethren and for his owne part he esteemed himselfe no better then a collation of al the abominable vices in the world, and one of the most greuous sinners as euer was; which in one so great a Saint and in whom so many vertues were assembled, was the more rare, and worthy the greater wonder and imitation.

And although this in general might suffice to affect vs to this excellent vertue, yet I wil sett you downe in particular a Method

& serue the B. V. Mary. 97

thod for the attayning it , giuen
by B. Tecelam a Religious of the
third Order , to a certaine freind
of his : who demanding of him
by what meanes the vertue of
Humility was to be acquired , he
answered; Contemne thy selfe,
and al thou hast in the world;
esteeme euery one more perfect
then thy selfe; and haue a slight
opinion of none ; make great
esteeme of thy faults, and litle of
thy vertues & perfections: count
litle al the good thou dost to
others , and the harme thou dost
for great ; and thou shalt be in a
faire way to Humility. To this
we may add S. Bonauentures ad-
vice for the attayning this holy
vertue; Abase thy selfe as lowly
as thou canst (sayes he) • Ima-
gine al men tny betters , and thy
E self

ielſe hardly worthy to be their
ſlaue, and ſo thou ſhalt arriue to
a tranquillity of mind, and neuer
be moleſted with offence or mo-
ued to impatience. By which ex-
cellent documents we may learn
to find out true humility and the
wayes that lead vnto, a Iour-
ney ſo profitable for our ſoules
which our B. Sauionr perſwads
vs to vndertake ſaying: Learne
of me to be meeke and humble
of hart. And thoſe ſeruants of the
B. Virgin: who are ſo indeed, eſ-
pecially women-kind are to ſhew
it in their exterior comportments
as they goe abroad in publique,
ſhewing neither pride nor vanity
in their lookes nor apparel, and
compaſing both according to the
exact rules of vertue and decency
For what an vnworthy thing
were

and serue the B. V. Mary. 99

were it in them, to appeare in the B. Virgins sight lesse vertuously adorn'd or decently behaued; things which she in her selfe so much abhorr'd as S. Epiphanius testifies of her together with diuers others, that her owne habit was euer plaine and simple without al affectation of riches or novelty, and (which is an euident signe of her owne purity (neuer subiect to any spott or stayne, but stil the more whit (as it wer) for her wearing it, This humility in their habits then let women learne of her, euen for the loue of our B. Saiuiour Christ who died naked on the ignominious Crosse for vs, and let not such vanity vnworthy of a Christian appeare in their habits and exterior garbe.

E 2 Suriu

Surius in the life of S. Elizabeth daughter of Andreas King of Hungary and wife of the Lantgraue of Turing, recounts a storie that comes wel to purpose here. She (says he) one day attired in her Maiestick robes in al her pompe and brauery entred the Church, where beholding iust at the entrance a Crucifix, she suddenly made a stand, and in great bitternes and compunction of hart, began in this manner to enter into comparison of her self with it; Shal, my Lord and Sauiour, remaine al naked nayled to this hard Crosse, & shal I miserable sinner as I am, go at pleasure vested in these costly robes, curiously embrodered with gold and precious stone? Shal my sweet Redeemer haue these diuine

and serue the B. V. Mary. 101

uine hands of his fastned to the
Crosse with cruel nayles, & shal
I weare on mine, al the delica-
cies that can be gott? O my Iesus,
shal I see thee, the only Spouse
of my hart, haue thy head trans-
pearc't with those sharp thornes;
& shal I with such magnificence
weare a crowne on mine? Alas,
and can I behold him abandoned
by al his freinds, and inhumane-
ly left for a prey, to the outra-
gious vsage of his enemies, and
sett vp as a marke for them to
shoote their horrible blasphe-
mies at; whilst I my self go with
so great a trayne, wayted vpon
and honoured at euery turne? O
miserable, most miserable as I
am, is this the loue I beare to my
Saiour Christ, are these my ac-
knowledgment and gratitud for

al his benefits? And in saying this a sodaine palenes, ouercast her face, and a greeuous fainting cast her in a trance: when returning out of it, she firmly purposed neuer to admit of superfluity againe in any thing she wore, & *de facto* euer after she went so mortified in her apparrel, as most commonly she had vnder it a rugged hayre cloth, and as often as the Dukes occasions absented him from her, she would be so coursly attired, as no poore woman but went better clad.

And certainly it is a deplorable thing euer with teares of bloud, to see what excesse of apparel & voluptuousnes raignes amongst women now a dayes, so as they seeme to place al their their felicity (as it were) in a newfangled fashion

and serue the B.V. Mary. 103

fashion or attire. I would they knew or considered how displeasing it is to Alm : God , or how many soules their vaine curiosities and foolish pride haue precipitated and cast downe to Hel, and what lamētable harmes haue had their origin from thence; for they are not only the cause of their owne sinnes , but also of others participation with them, whilst in regarding them the bayte hath been but layd by the Enemy to draw thousands vnto hel. Which perhapps we should hardly Credit, did not the holy Ghost it selfe affirme it : Turne away thy face (sayes he) from a woman Curiosity adorned , for many haue been taken by the beauty of women , and become reprobate ; a horrible thing to

E 4 ima-

imagination. And how many Religious men haue we seene drawne by the attraction of beauty, first to insinuat themselves into their familiarities vnder the pretence of sanctity and spiritual conuerse, and after by degrees so deeply engaged in their societies, as without hazard of their saluations they haue neuer been able to get out. The whilst with a deafe eare they haue neglected all the inspirations of heaven, flattering themselves with certaine pernicious Maximes grounded vpon I know not what imaginarie shew of good manners and curtesy; For what (will they say) should we turne our backs to them? and what were that but to giue them cause to thinke vs Clownes, and iustly to accuse vs
of

and serue the B.V. Mary. 105
of discourtesy and inciuility. But
happy is the soule the whilst that
reiects these vaine feares, in a
matter in which their saluation
is so much concern'd, and prefer
their soules immortal good be-
fore al other humane respects.
Let women therfore take war-
ning and leaue off in time, al af-
fection and superfluity in their
behauour & attire least they in-
curr as great or greater punish-
ment then she did, whose story I
wil here relate, out of the second
part of the Chronicles of the
Frier-Minors.

A Religious man of the Pro-
uince of Sicily, praying one day
in the Church of his Conuent,
had the apparition of a woman al-
naked presented before his eyes,
whom he coniuring in the name

E v of

of God, to declare vnto him what she was, she answered with great shame and confusion; I was (said she a woman of fashion and quality in my dayes, and of plentiful fortune, al which I abused so, to his offence who gaue it me, as in al my life I had no other thought, than how to adorne me in most curious manner, and follow still the fashions of the time, till coming to die it, was God Almightyes mercy to me, I should repent me of my sinns, and with true Contrition make an entire Confession of them, by which meanes I had them al forgiuen me on this cōdition that I should for penance of my former vanity, off attire, wander in this manner naked vp and downe the world; and hauing sayd this, she disappeared.

peared. Where is to be noted, that although the poore soule for its greater Confusion imagined she was a spectacle to al, yet none saw her but those whom God Almighty pleas'd to reueale this his secret iudgement vnto, in whom it excited rather a holy feare of the seuerer punishments of Alm. God, then any vnlawful imagination or desire.

Let those then who desire to render themselves acceptable in the eyes of the B. Virgin endeavour with al their might to become humble both in the exteriour & exteriour humility being the only vertue on which God bestowes his most abundant fauours. God resists the proud (says the holy Scripture) and giues his grace to the humble. And the
most

most sure and infallible way to heaven is true Humility. Humility (says S. Augustin) is the Queene of vertues, the destruction of vice, the mirrour of Virgins, and the throne of the holy Trinity.

In fine, humility is that, which best teaches vs both to Know the deceits of the diuel, & to auoyd them, being knowne; as was reueal'd to S. Anthony, when beholding one day in vision al the world sett with snares about, he cried out; O Lord, how is it possible for one to escape al these? and he was answered by a voice from heauen; by being humble, Anthony; for onely Humility stoopes so low, 'tis neuer entangled by them. And so we reade; how the diuel once appear'd to
S. Maca-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 109

S. Macarius with a mightie scithe in his hand, threatening him as if he would haue mowed him off, & crying out against him; O Macarius, what a cruel strife is there betwixt vs two, and yet how impossible it is for me to ouercome thee: I do al that thou doest and more, for thou watchest sometimes and I neuer sleepe; somety-
mes thou fastest but I neuer eate; I thinke as obiectly, and sett as light as by the worlds vanityes. as thou; only one thing there is in which thou surmountest me, which is that profound humility of thine. We see then, what admirable force this Christian Humility hath, to ouerthrow pride, and triumphe ouer the stratagems and forces of the Enemy; a force so great, as the very mention of
it

it is enough to put al the armies of Hel to flight; which I wil confirme by an example taken out of the Frier Minors Chronicle, and it is this.

In the Conuent of Perusia the Prouince, where S. Francis was borne, there was a Guardian of an austere life, endowed with al the vertues of a good Religious man; now it happened that a noble man of the Countrey on Christmas-Eue sent an expresse messenger to desire him to send one of his Religious the next day to say Masse for him, and it hapned iust at the instant that two of his Religious returning from a long journey, weary with trauayling and almost dead with cold and hunger, he presently commaunded them to satisfie the desire of
the

to serue the B.V. Mary. III
the Noble-man; which they as
presently vndertake without once
murmuring and repyning at his
cōmaund or alleadging for their
excuses their great necessities;
Going then with great humility
and obedience, behold they were
scarce halfe way on their iourney,
but they were ouertaken by night
and involued in so thicke a darck-
nes that they could not see their
way; which incommodity ioyned
to that of their hunger and cold,
made their case the more commi-
ferable; when seeing themselues
so destitut of al humane helpe,
they had their ordinary recourse
to the diuine helpe beseeching
Almighty God, to succour them
in their so great necessitie, and
in the meane time going on,
though whether right or no they
could

could not tel; at last they heard the ringing of a Bell, and their eares directing their steps, at last they arriued at a Monastery (as it seem'd;) where hauing knockt, the gate was presently opened, and al the Religious in flock came to salute them; from thence they convey'd them to their chamber, where they had al things prepar'd for their rest & refreshment with great diligence; At last the Religious departing from them exacted of them a promise to make them some short exhortation before the next dayes Matins. Wel, the morning being come, and it ringing to Matins, the Religious were al assembled, and one of these good Fathers an excellent Preacher began to make them an exhorta-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 113

exhortation taking for his text these words of the Prophet E-
saïas : A child is borne vnto vs,
and a sonne is giuen vs; on which
he discoursed most diuinely of
our Sauours humility in descen-
ding so low to take vpon him our
humane nature, and whilst he
was in the heat of his exhorta-
tion he might perceiue al the Re-
ligious one after another slinking
away till at last there was only
left the Abbot in the Quire. Whē
al amazed demanding of him the
reason why his Monkes had left
him so? your self are the cause;
sayd he, how is that possible an-
swered the good man againe?
Why (sayd the Abbot) you haue
discourst in such manner of I
know not what humility of the
sonne

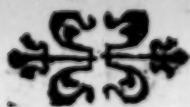
II4 *A Method to loue*

sonne of God , as they neither would nor could endure to heare it prayſ'd and extolled ſo much: for to diſcouer the truth vnto you, we are not (as we ſeeme) Religious men but diuels , who in reward of your prompt obedience to your Superiour haue been, cōſtrayn'd to giue you that aſſiſtance you haue receiued of vs to night, and hauing, ſayd this, both he & the Monastery and al diſ-appeared, leauing the good Religious men mightily aſtoniſh't at ſo wondrous an accident and in the ſame place where they firſt hard the Bell, from whence they tooke their iourney towards the Nobleman, al the way thanking and glorifying God for his great fauours & benefits beſtowed vpon them.

Many other examples of this
great

and serue the B.V. Mary. It is
great vertue I could recount, and
especiallly that of the B. Virgin,
who when the Highest had chosen
her for his mother profest her
selfe the lowlyest of his seruants,
& in her greatest honors went in
visitation of S. Elizabeth, and ser-
ued her for three space moneths;
then with what greater humi-
lity can be imagined? besides
how lowly did she matche her
self, onely to a poore Artificer, to
whom she continued dutiful and
obedient euen to death, comfort-
ing her selfe alwayes with those
who were most poore and hum-
ble; as we may gather by the ma-
riage she was present at of that
poore couple at Cana in Galilee,
neither refusing her company to
the most greeuous sinners such as
was S. Mary Magdalen and the
like,

like; and al this humility in one, who was exalted to so high a dignity, as to be mother of God, and Queene of heauen & earth, was so much the more admirable and rare, that she should neuer boast her of any honour she had, nor be the more exalted in her mind for being so high exalted indignity; but neither on this nor any other example for the present wil I further enlarge my selfe, not to exceed the limits of that breuity I haue proposed to my self.



*Of the second Condition
Which the deuout seruants
of the B Virgin ought to
haue, which is Chastity.*



AND if the seruants
of the B. Virgin be
so grateful and acce-
ptable vnto her by
reason of their Hu-
mility, how great must needs
her fauour be towards those, who
add to this vertue that of Chastity
too, which so purifies and embel-
lishes a soule? in how singular re-
commendation must she needs
haue them, & how tenderly che-
rish them? Humility and Virgi-
nity

nity were so equally in this Blessed Lady, as to which to giue the pre-eminence we do not knowe; so happy was her Virginy in being adorned with such humility, that admitted of no vaine presumption of it, and so happy was her humility in hauing the honour of such virginity, which defended it from all misprision and contempt; and what clearer testimony can there be of this holy Virgins immaculate Chastity then these words of hers; How can this be, seeing I know not man? And of her humility on the other side, then those which presently follow: Behold the handmayd of our Lord; be it don vnto me according to thy word. O what a mariage was heere of these two vertues in the B. Mayd, where chastity became
so

& serue the B. V. Mary. 119

so humble, and humility so chaste? what higher dignity could there bee, then to be Mother of God, and yet she profest her selfe his humblest seruant, aba-sing her selfe as low as he had exalted her, so as S. Antoninus had iust cause to saye, that it was cheifly the attraction of her humility, which drew the sonne of God from heauen, to make in her wombe another heauen on death.

Al then, but cheifly those of her owne sexe, are to imitate this B. Virgin in her Angelical purity, who is proposed a paterne and example vnto al. It wa's she; that first aduanced the standard of Virginitie, vnder whose white colours so many since haue fought, and first ledd the way, which so many Virgine-soules haue

haue followed since, of consecrating theyr virginities vnto God by vowe; in doing which (sayes S. Anselme) she sauoured more of diuine then mortal: neither did the name of Mother any thing derogat from the dignity of a Virgin, but rather dignified it the more, adding the fruit of a mother to the flower of virginity in a diuine & admirable manner. Wherefore with good reason she is stiled Virgin of Virgins; who began a paterne to al the rest, of Consecrating their virginities to God; a work so grateful to him and acceptable.

O happy and thrice happy Virgins, then, who perpetuate their Virginities by vow vnto Alm. God, in spight of al resistance the world doth make; seing besides
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 121

the many prerogatiues they haue
aboue those who are wedded to
men; they enioy by it such a Con-
solation of mind, as surpasses al
the Comforts in the world.

In confirmation of which, I
wil relate the excellent discourse
of Nereus and Achilles to S. Do-
mitilla in commendation of vir-
ginity when they perswaded her
to Christianity. These seing her
curious in adoring her self, tooke
occasion from thence to dispose
her minde: Madame (sayd they)
if you were but as sollicitous to
adorne your soule with vertues,
as you are in setting your body
of, with these superfluous orna-
mēts to please your spouse Vale-
rian, without al doubt you would
take the eies of Iesus Christ with
it, a farr more noble spouse then
F he,

he, and one who would farr more deferue of you, with whom you should liue still in an increase of beauty: whilst your other would only liue vpon the spoiles and the decayes if it; To whom she answered, (yet vnskild in Christian perfection, and one that knew nothing but what the world and flesh dictated vnto her) what can be more happy sayd she, then the state of mariage, which comprises in it al that is of honour and felicity? Alas, Madame, said Ne-reus againe,) you know no more then the vaine pleasures which vanish with this blast of life, and are ignorant as yet (it seemes) of those euermlasting ones in the other life, and waighs the commodities of mariage al if, you putt not its incommodities in the
other

other scale, which I would haue you carefully doe, before you loose, a good can neuer once lost be recouered againe; And what good is that, saye she? your liberty, answered he, which with the litle of Virgin you must forgoe, changing it for a seruile estate and flauish obsequiousnes vnto one whose humors you know not and which perharps may be such, as out of pure Lealously he may interdict you the company of your nearest freinds, and those who you most esteeme, behauing himselfe so harshly towards you, as no slaue but should liue a more contented life then you. Al this, halfe smiling she ask't him, whither his general rule had no exception; for (sayd she) I grant you Lealously is a vice but

too ordinary in men, which my mothers sad experience renders but too manifest, yet is it not so fatal to al the kind, but there is some so happy to be exempted from it, and amongst the rest, the excellent dispose of my Aurelian promises him to be one. Achilles to this replyed, Madam, (said he) be not to confident, for these yong louers in the heat of their poursuite, the easier to attaine to their desires, dissemble their natural inclinations, and appeare more mild and gentle then they are; but those once attayn'd, off goes the maske of their dissimulation, and then you shal see how iealous they can be, how harsh and crosse in their dispositions, how iniurious to you in words, and not seldone also in deeds. But
sup-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 125

suppose them of a more temperat
humour and more gently inclin'd,
what priuiledge enioy they by it?
If you shal giue me leaue, I wil
tel you what: To beare a painful
burthen in the wombe nine mo-
neths together, to waxe leane and
pale with it, to be subiect to a
thousand languors and disguists
the while if you haue no Chil-
dren. Lord what discontents,
what repinning at it? If you haue
with what danger? and how of-
ten in giuing their life do Mo-
thers loose their owne? what care
and trouble in their education?
What feares least al their labours
should be lost, and death make his
haruest of what they had sowne
with paine? then what disconforts
do they bring their parents with
their lewdnes and vntowardnes;

F 3

some

some liuing so as they wish they had neuerben borne ; others dying so , as they wish-they had neuer lived ; so as both a liue and dead, they seeme only borne, for their Parents affliction. At this; Nereus crossing his armes and lifting vpp his eys like one in extasie , concluded thus : O happy then the state of virginity which exempts vs from al these miseries and vnites the soule that is honored with it , to Alm. God O most riche and incomparable treasure, whose possession exceeds al esteeme , and repaires al losse; and O Diuine loue , and more then humane fortitude , by which a weake woman can subdue the flesh , & with a generosity aboue the weaknes of her sexe , wage warr with the world, overcome
her

& serue the B. V. Mary. 127

her appetites, and vanquish the forces both of death and hel itself; for which they shal one day enioy a Crowne, with which none in heauen shalbe honoured but they. With these speeches of her deuout seruants, but much more with those which heauen spoke to her inward hart, the Lady was so moued, as she presently consecrated her Virginity to God, for whose loue vnto the palme of Virginity she after added that of Martyrdome.

Now we are to note, there are three sorts of Chastitys in the Church, by either of which the B. Virgins deuout seruants may become grateful vnto her. The first is Matrimonial Chastity, when man and wife loyally obserue their Coniugal faith to one

another : The second is Vidual Chastity , when Widowes free from the obseruance of man , liue afterwards in perpetual continency, & this excels in excellēcy the first degree , as S. Paul saies speaking of widowes; *Yet they are more happy so*, sayes he, *If you wil Credit me.* The third is Virginal Chastity , more excellent then both the other more perfect and more meritorious; and this is, when we cōserue our selues in our integrity of body & mind dedicating our virginities to Alm. God , which, oh , how grateful how acceptable it is to the B. Virgin, who prefers it before al other oblatiōs. Seing then al these three sorts of Chastity are with proportion both good and laudable , and with the B. Virgin of pretious esteeme, let those

and serue the B.V. Mary. 129

those that are deuoted to her, be they maid, widow, or wife, endeavour in their seuerall degrees, to present her with this grateful offering, to which end they are to resolute to fight manfully, for the Enemies that oppugne it, are both many and powerful, their Arts full of all ambushes, and their endeauours incessant for the ouercoming of vs: so as S. Augustine considering the difficulty of the fight, and rarenes of the victory, with good reason sayd: *Amongst all the warrs the Christians had, that of Chastity was the most sharpe, and pressed vs most; where the Combat lasted alwayes, and an entire victory was neuer gott attayned vnto; and those that naturely ponder it find it true. For but consider how few they are, that fight it manfully*

F v indeed,

indeed, in compare with those who cowardly yeild vnto the Enemy, and we may truely saye, the diuel gaines by nothing more then this; for how many of al ages and conditions, of either sexe, doth the Enemy precipitate into this vice, who for the rest stood firme enough? To which purpose S. Augustin hath a feareful saying: *Excepting Infants* (saies he) *this only sinne is the occasion that so few of the rest are saued.* Who at hearing of this, is not astonished? & conceiues not a pittie of our miserable estate, to see how headlong al runne vnto this vice. And as for the seruants of the B. Virgin, what excuse can they pretend for their excesses herein? what wayes they to please her, whilst they displease her heere?

Do.

& serue the B. V. Mary. 131

Do they thinke, that saying their beads frequently wil do it? or their fastings on Saturdayes and the like? Alas, no, they doe but deceiue themselves, and the vsurpīg such an honourable title as to be her seruants, whilst they are such? Doth but more encrease their damnation, whilst they abuse that name to the dishonour of Chastity by which ought to be cheefly honoured, and while they put on the face of wearing her livery, but weare the badge of her Enemy in their harts. Alas, how many may we imagine now in hel, who were once deuoted to the B. Virgin as wel as we, till with a foolish presumption of their saluation, they with a deafe eare past ouer her saving and diuine suggestions & fel: to which
if

if wee desire to be saued indeed,
we must lend an attentiu eare ban-
nishing from our harts, al mo-
tions of sensuality, and entertai-
ning al chaste ones in their place,
or else we leese her fauour, and
it wil be wo with vs.

But aboue al for conseruation
of our Chastity, it is necessary to
flie al occasions and inducements
to the contrary, for this is such a
kinde of victory, as is best gai-
ned by flight, and they that fre-
quently expose themselues to
daunger in it, are ouercome at
last. Wherefore let none enter in-
to an ouer-wening of theselues
or their forces for any former vic-
tory, for they may easily leese in
a moment what they haue been
in an age a getting, and slight
occasion may rauish from them
that,

& serue the B. V. Mary. 133

that, which many difficult ones went to the obtaining of; and let no humane or nice respect, make them be wanting heer, to the care they ought to haue of their chastity; for many out of punctillios of honour haue stood so long vpon it, till they haue falne, and many by daungerous familiarities haue been deceiued. Rather let them flie carefully the aspect and haunt of those, whose companies may endanger them, following the Counsell of our Sauiour in it; *If thy hand or feet scandalize the, cut them off, &c. or if thine eye, pluck it out*: which counsell some Saints haue followed so neer, as S. Bridget in particular, not only auoided in her self al occasions of sinning in this particular, but to auoid it also in others, she

she prayed to Alm. God, he would conuert al the vertue she had into deformity: Others there haue been, that haue disfigured themselves rather then to giue cause to any temptation; and others rather then suffer the effect of it, haue willingly departed with their proper liues. Which I will confirme by an example taken out of the second part off the F F. Minors Chronicle.

- A Burgundian Gentelman had a daughter so affected to the seruice of the Mother of God, that secretly from her tender yeares she vowed her virginity to her. This virgin had a corporal beauty, ioyned to the beauty of her soule, so taking, as it attracted to her the harts of al. Among the rest, a seruant of her fathers was
one

& serue the B.V. Mary. 135

one, who omitted no arts nor industries to oblige her to a reciprocal affection to him; But this not taking, his loue grew desperat, and at length engaged him in as desperat a course; For his Lord and al his seruants being gon a hunting, he secretly, returned home, when his daughter was either not accompanied at al, or els slenderly only by her maydes; and taking that opportunity to execut his wickdnes, went and found her out, where in the Chappel she was prostrat at her deuotions before a picture of the Queene of heauen: into which he entred audaciously and without any reuerence to the place, or respect to the person, tould the reason of his retourne, and how desperatly he was in loue with her

her, coniuring her by al the force of a wicked eloquence to the accomplishment of his desires. Whereat the Virgin was so struck at the first, what with the impudence of the fellow, what with the horror and vnexpectednes of his demand as she remayned a while deuoyd of speech and sense, til at last rowling her spirits vp, with a iust disdaine and bashful anger, she answered him; Gett hence thou impudent villaine, and seek out some others more fitt to heare and grant thy suite then I: and whence is this insolence in thee? haue you euer seen any thing in me, that should thus embolden it? but cease your boldnes and your insolence, or I know the way to bring you to deare repentance of it the fellow
at

and serue the B. V. Mary. 137

at this, growne wholly desperat;
and rageing no lesse for anger
then for loue, drew out his
sword, & fixing the point against
her throte, told her there was but
one way with her, eyther to re-
solve to dy, or to satisfy his desire;
thy desire (sayd she?) rather then
by me such a wicked desire shalbe
euer satisfied, had I a thousand
liues I would willingly loose
them al; but you consider better
(said he) for assure your self I am
not in iest; Bee in what mind thou
wilt, replied she, doe thy worst,
and when thou hast done, goe
vaunt to such as thou art, how
thou hast traiterously murthered
thy Lords daughter in his owne
house in defence of her Chastity.
This put him wholly into the
hands of furye and desperation,
and

and made him at one blow cutt off her head. When flying instantly to the Vicar of the place who was his Vncle, he made him acquainted with what he had done; Who being much troubled at it, advised him to lye concealed in a secret place which he shewed him, til he had don Masse and had further aduised what course to take with him. Meane while behold a stupendious miracle. An Angel sent from heauen presently vnited the trunke of our beheaded Virgin soe properly to the head againe, as there only remained a red streake about the neck in memory that it was once cutt off when she restored to life againe, had presently recourse to Church to heare Masse, and render thanks to Alm: God for that
mira-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 139

miraculous fauour; Being there, it happened the Curat at the Offertory descending from the Altar, with much astonishment espied her, and beleeuing it rather some phantasme come to fright him, then her returning to life againe, suspended his astonishment and his feares, til after Masse, when he repaired vnto her more fully to informe himselfe of what she was; Then she reconted from point to point, al that had hapned to her, grieuouſly a complayning of his Nephewes barbarousnes, and in particular of his irreuerence towards God and his B. Mother: The good man lost in admiration of the accident, as soone as he had found himself, was al in teares, beseeching her to keepe secret this hainous

haynous offence of his Nephew,
and pardon it. For my particular,
said she, I doe from my hart; but
how Heauen wil pardon him; I
know not; For that, said the Cu-
rate, I trust in the infinite mercy
of Alm. God, only yours was al
my feare, and there vpon he pro-
duced his Nephew, who on his
knees shedding abundant teares
besought her of pardon; when
she rayfed him vpp, and as if she
had forgotten how much he had
offended her, in this mild manner
spake vnto him: My freind, said
she, I haue already past my pro-
mise to your vncle that I wil for-
giue you; only procure by pe-
nance to purchase the forgiuenes
of Alm. God, and his B. Mother,
or I assure you, a more rigorous
punishment then this world has
any

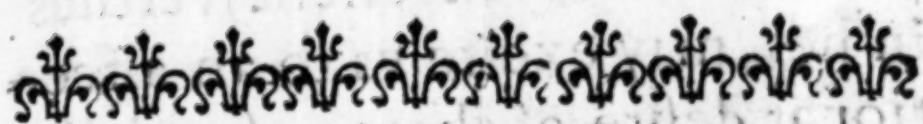
and serue the B.V. Mary. 141

any, is in store for you : Sweet Mistres, said he, (making profound reuerence vnto her, and declaring by his sighes; and teares a more profound greefe & sorrow) how good and gracious you are, not only to preferue my temporal life, (which if you pleased to take it; were forfeited vnto you) but to take such care of my eternal on; yet besides this fauour I must needs begg another, which is, that from that mouth, which for so greeuous a trespasse has pronounc't my pardon, I may heare what penance I shal performe for it. Since you wil (said she) you shal; only take it by way of counsel not of command, and it is this, That you become a Friar Minor, and before you are so, Confesse your selfe wholly and entire-

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entirely of al your wickednes:
This the sorrowful soule willin-
gly accepted of: and hauing punc-
tually performed what she inioi-
ned him, in short space made such
progresse in Religion, as he be-
came an example of perfection
vnto al. And by this we may per-
ceiue ; how succourable the B.
Virgin is , to those who for the
Imitation of her , preferue this
virginity so carefully, as rather
to depart with it , they chose to
depart this life.





*The third Condition, which
is requisit in the honou-
rers of the B Virgin, Of
cleannes and purity of
mind.*



TH E sacred Virgin
being not only a
bright shining mir-
rour of Humility &
Chastity, to its per-
fection, but also of incomparable
purity of mind, wee who make
profession of being her seruants,
ought to haue her example al-
wayes before our eyes, to the
end the cōtinual Contemplation
of

of these three excellent vertues in her, may excite vs to an affectionat desire of them, especially that of purity of mind, it being the most exquisit beauty of the soule, and an ornament which most of al illustrats it. Now this purity of mind is nothing els (according to Albert the great, as he alleaged by S. Antonine) but a reccession from al impurity, which is sinne, and an accession to God the soueraigne purity & in this consists the true sanctity of the soule, for the more we weed it of imperfections, the more place is left for perfections to spring vp in it; and so S. Dionyse defyning sanctity sayes, that it is a perfect purity abstracting from al sinne, and cleansed from al impurity; whence we may wel conclude

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conclude, that purity is no other thing, then an exemption from al imperfection.

Let the pious Reader then imagine the purity of the B. Virgins mind, who of al the Children of Adam was not only exēpted from al actual sinne, but also from original; and that because of the conueniency (as S. Anselme would haue it) that she who was the Mother of God should next to him haue al imaginable purity; which could not be, if she had not been preserued from original sinne. Besides, God hauing predestinated her to a degree of honour, the highest that any creature could be capable of, it followed consequently he should endow her with a purity aboue al other creatures, and so al the fa-
G culties

culties of his power wisdom and goodnes, (we may imagine) were at once imploied in enriching her with such gifts and supernatural preparations, as rendered her of al creatures the most eminent; in such manner as those who had but the eies of spirit open to penetrat into the beautie and perfection of her glorious soule would infallibly more admire Gods workmanship, and see more admirable effects of it in her; then in the fabrick and creation of the Vniuersal. Neuer any thing came immediatly out of the hand of God, but it was pure, perfect and compleat; he created the Angels from the purest of the Heauens perfect and pure, he created man likewise, of the most pure-parts of the Earth

and serue the B.V. Mary. 147

Earth, and Eue from the purest flesh and bone of Adam, whilst he was yet in the state of Innocency was created pure; and the reason is, because the nigher to the principal of puritie a thing is, euer the more pure it is. This being so, what can be more resplendent (saies S. Ambrose) then she in whom purity it selfe close to abide? what finally more vnblemisht, then she whom the Sone of God chose to inuest himselfe withal? And if God hath fauoured other creatures with that highe prerogatiue to be borne in grace and exempt from sinne, who can doubt but she in a special manner was borne so, and exempted aboue the rest? For what incongruency els were it to haue the mother inferior to her

Children the Queene to her subjects and. Seing then the Angels, and both Adam and Eue more created in grace and in the state of innocency, why should we deny the Queene of Angels, and the repairer of Adam and Eues offences, the life prerogative? Yet let vs passe farther, and affirme the B. Virgin excelling in purity by infinit degrees not only al men and women in the world, but also al Angels, Archangels, and the highest Seraphins in heauen. For this, S. Hilariion affirmes of her addressing himself vnto her in this deuout manner. *O souerainely happy Virgin aboue al women, and surmounting euen the Angels themselves in purity.*

Her sanctity then being so great, we may wel conclude of
her

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her, that there was neuer in her any blemish of sinne, nor the least shadow of imperfection. Let vs consider her then, being so immaculate as she was, as an Idea framed by God, of al Chastity, as a liuely paterne of perfection in women, model of supreme purity and finally schoole of al Vertues, Virgin both in mind and body, humble of heart, graue in disco- uery, prudent in action, neuer stirring abroad til inuited by necessity sober and mortified, wearing alwayes in her Contenance a holy bashfullnes, her gate wel ordered and composed, simple in Clothing, moderat in her voice, neuer laughing but weeping often, sparing of speech, alwayes wel imployed, hauing stil in hand some profitable booke, assiduous

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in

in prayer, during which she seemed still in extasy; more abhorring sinne, then all the men of the world together as one who better then them all together knew, how hateful and detestable it was to Alm. God: she was of a spirit perpetually attentive to the exercise of vertue and holy life, holding in a generous dis-esteem all the honours dignities and riches of the world, as knowing how contemptible they were all, in compare with those of heauen, whose soueraigne Queene and Empresse she was to bee: how was it possible then she should euer fall into any sinne, being of so excellent a soule, and it being replenished with so many diuine graces & perfections? and From whence (sayes Dionyse the Carthusian

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thusian) we may imagine these
beames proceeded, which shoo-
ting from her countenance ren-
dred her so resplendent and ve-
nerable to al that regarded her;
al which were nothing yet in
compare with the inward rayes
that illustrated her mind, which
gaue light vnto the Angels of
light themselves; her regard was
such according to S. Ambrose &
S. Bonauenture) as her bare sight
was sufficient to reclaime euen
those that were furthest gon in
sinne; but that which was most,
admirable in her, and which most
raushes in astonishment both
men and Angels, was her being at
once both Mother & Virgin, vir-
gin in purity, & Mother in fecun-
dity; A prodigie of al others the
most stupendious, and a preroga-

tiue only appropriat to this rare Phenix of perfection ; for to whom els were attributed euer these supreme titles of honour, Virgin before child-birth, Virgin in child-birth , and Virgin after it? Yet? tis an Article of faith , and al doubt thereof interdicted by the holy Church ; for the Consummation of which, we wil here relate a Miracle happening to B. Giles one of the first Companions of S. Francis , and it was this.

A Religious Diuine of the Order of S. Dominick , being once vehemently tempted by the Diuel sworne Enemy to the B. Virgin) to cal in doubt her vndubitable Virginitie, and not sufficing by his owne forces to shake it off, was resolu'd to vse the helpe of
some

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some other, and hearing the fame of B. Giles for sanctity, resolu'd it should be he. Being on his way towards the Conuent where the holy man resided, who by diuine reuelation vnderstood the cause of his iourney, behold he was ready to meete him, and embrace him with al the freindly expressions of a Religious charity; and e're euer the other opened his mouth to communicat with him of his temptation, he sayd ynto him; Brother and freind, assure your selfe, shee was a virgin before child-birth; when raking the ground with a litle wane he had, one Lilly presently sprung vp, then conuerting himselfe to him againe; so assure your self, said he. she was a virgin in child-birth, & a second Lilly sprung vp in confirmation

G v

firmation therof; finally, the third time addressing himfelfe to him he faid, assure your felfe laftly (faid he) that fhe was a virgin after child-birth too; and this by the springing vp of a third Lilly, being confirmed alfo, the Diuine remained deliuered from his tēp-tation and rendred infinit thanks to Alm. God, for his fo miracu-lous deliuary.

Let this fuffice for a more ample confirmation of the foueraigne Puritie of the Queene of heauen. Let thofe then who defire with a due purity of hart to ferue this glorious Virgin, endeavour with al their forces to imitat her, in her admirable purity and Innocencie of life, that is, to haue a hart vntainted, and free from al contagion of finne, eſpecially
ſuch

and serue the B.V. Mary. 155

such as are mortal, since, as the Angelical Doctour teaches vs; The farther that purity is removed from sinne, the purer stil it growes; so shal wee haue part in the benediction: *Blessed are the pure of hart, for they shal see God.*

And to come yet neerer to particulars, those are pure of hart, whose consciences are free from mortal sinne; those more pure, are likewise free from venial; but those most of al, who accompany this freedome from sinne, with the assidual practise of vertue, and this according to S. Christostom, is to be pure of hart. S. Hierome defines it, to haue a conscience that can accuse vs of no sinne, at al, such an one as that of our B. Ladyes was, who according to S. Bonauenture, was so pure from sinne,

sinne, as it was reueal'd to a certaine person, as her conscience vnderstood not what it meant. O happy and a thousand times happy are such as those, whose breast being pure, & inuested with these white robes of purity, do serue in that livery the soueraigne Queene of heauen; for these are truly her seruants, these truly her favorits, and such as in the next life she peculinary honours and aduances aboue the rest.

We reade of S. Lewis Archbishop of Tholouse, who issue from the Royal bloud of France, and was once a Frier-Minor; how he in his life neuer committed mortal sinne; this holy Saint dying at the age of 80. yeares, a certaine Frier-Minor farr from the place of his death, and ignorant

& serue the B. V. Mary. 157

rant of his infirmity, had a vision
iust at the instant of his depar-
ture of innumerable Angels bea-
ring his soule to heauen, and sing-
ing melodiously on the way; So
*are they rewarded who serue God in
purity and chastity of hart*; and for
his chastity and purity we haue
the attestation of al that conuer-
sed with him, that al his actions
and wordes fauoured of nothing
else.

And as vehemently is the B.
Virgin displeased with the con-
trary vice, as with this vertue she
is pleas'd; as witnesseth this fol-
lowing storie recounted by the
learned Pelbart; A yong Gentle-
man of a debaushed life, exerci-
sing some deuotions in the ho-
nour of the B. Virgin, she one
day whilst he inuoked her aide
(being

(being straied in a wildernes & almost famished) appeared vnto him accompanied with a glorious train of Virgins, bearing in their hands al sorts of delicat meates, but serued in so foule and lothsome dishes, as although his hunger was molt vrgent, yet for very loathing he would not eate abitt; which the B. Virgin perceiuing, aptly took occasion to reprehend him saying; euen such are your deuotions you offer vp to me; Good in themselues, but coming from one so foule with sinne, my heart serues me not to accept of them; so she vanished, and left him so stricken with this reprehension by the bitter flaine of his former life, as for the time to come he wholly amended it.

Let those then, who haue the
honour

& serue the B. V. Mary. 159

honour to be stiled the seruants
of the B. Virgin, that their serui-
ces may be the more acceptable
to her, endeauour to keepe vp,
to the highest point of this per-
fection of purity of hart, that is,
to be so farr from the conscience
of any mortal sinne, as euen to
decline venial as farr as it is pos-
sible; from the which the farther
they are, the nigher they appro-
che vnto perfection, and the more
they increase in grace and holi-
nes of life. Happy is that soule
then, which growing dayly per-
fecter in this purity of hart, shal
finde a ready way to euery grace
and perfection it shalbe desirous
to obtaine, & merit to haue Alm.
God amply communicat them
vnto vs, whose property it is to
be most bountious of his fauour
to

to the pure, to impart himselfe vnto them in a particular manner, and enrich them with his diuine Consolations. And this Hart of ours being a thing of such perfection, each least defect in it, appeares to be deformity, it being (as Bro. Giles was vsed to saye) like a bright mirrour which the least breath would sett a blemish on; For which reason the Wise man so earnestly recomends vnto vs the Custody of it. *Looke Carefully to thy hart*, sayes he, *for thy life depends on it.* And so we see, how little a thing diminishes of its merit and purity; an idle or ridiculous word a little leuity in our actions, a friuolous Curiosity, a lesse modest regard, immoderate laughter, or such like, which we account of as things light and indifferent

and serue the B.V. Mary. 161

different. Now the better to conserue this purity of hart, we must be most careful of our Exteriour senses, our eyes, eares, smell, touching, tasting, &c. least the Enemy preuaile himself by them against our selues.

To expresse the danger of which F. Iacopen of the holy Order of S. Francis, hath an apt similitude; there was (sayes this holy man) a virgin of excellent beauty, having for her dower a Iewel of inestimable price, who had five brothers all poore and necessitous; the one a Musician, the other a Painter, the third a Perfumer, the fourth a Cooke, and the fifth a setter of others chastityes to sake. One day the Musician addrest himself, vnto her, and with an accent, as charming, as it was pit-

to the pure, to impart himselfe vnto them in a particular manner, and enrich them with his diuine Consolations. And this Hart of ours being a thing of such perfection, each least defect in it, appeares to be deformity, it being (as Bro. Giles was vsed to saye) like a bright mirrour which the least breath would sett a blemish on; For which reason the Wiseman so earnestly recomends vnto vs the Custody of it. *Looke Carefully to thy hart*, sayes he, *for thy life depends on it.* And so we see, how litle a thing diminishes of its merit and purity; an idle or ridiculous word a litle leuity in our actions, a friuolous Curiosity, a lesse modest regard, immoderate laughter, or such like, which we account of as things light and indifferent

and serue the B.V. Mary. 161

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One day the Musician addrest himself, vnto her, and with an accent, as charming, as it was pitiful

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tiful, desired her of pittie in his extreme necessity, if euer Charity, sayd he, were deare vnto you, or if euer you knew what pittie meant, declare it now in your assisting me; giue me your Iewel to redeeme me from my wants; it is a bould request I grant, both in regard of the greatnes of its value, and the smalnes of my deseruings, but the greater honour wilbe yours, with foe vn-interested a Charity, to assist a brother in his necessity, and the greater wilbe my obligation; and heer so paus'd a while, as if his greefe had stopt the passage of his speech; But she remaining Inexorable to his prayers, answered him thus: My deare brother, I would do much for you, but satisfie your demand I cannot; for the same
Charity

& serue the B.V. Mary. 163

Charity which obliges me to benefit others, first of al obliges me to benefit my selfe; what a folly were it in me then, by my enriching others, to make my self for euer poore, you know I haue nothing but it to maintaine my life, and to depart with it were to expose my life te extreme necessity; Wel (answered the Musician) then, since you wil not giue it me, at least sel it me: and what wil you giue me for it? I wil take my Lute, sayd he, and sing you two of the newest Ayres at Court at this she laughing, ask't him, when they were done, what remains for her to liue vpon? no, no, sayd she, brother you shal pardon me, I wil not sell soe pretious a Iewel for so slight a thing. After him the Painter came vnto
her

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her with the same request, offering one of his best peeces, in exchange, but she refused him as she had don the former. Then the Cooke, & the Perfumer came next, this profering for it, one of the delicatest perfums he had, the other the most sauory dishe he could inuent; but they as the former fayling of their pretenses; the fift lewd Companion, addresing himselfe vnto her, who knew wel the arts of perswasion, and how to instil his words into the mind, offred her for it, after a world of smooth and soothing word, her choice of a hundred Paramours; But being as the rest reiected, it hapned not long after, that a mighty King moued by the fame of this riche Iewel, came to demand it of her, offering
to

and serue the B.V. Mary. 165

to marry her on the condition that he might haue it, & giue her for dowry his Immortal Kingdome; when she ouercome by the greatnes of his offers, but much more by the goodnes of the Offerer, thus answered him; My Lord, it were Impudence in me to refuse you, wherefore behold I freely giue it you, without any reserue at al, and desire no other recompense for it, but that you would vouchsafeto accept it; and excuse the smalnes of her merit that giues it you. This similitud the holy man would explicat in this manner; The Virgin is the soule, the Iewel, the Free wil she hath; her fise brothers, her fise Corporal senses; the King, Alm. God; as for the rest, is obuious enough.

And

And heere I could take occasion to inueigh against those, who would beheld deuout (forsooth) to the B. Virgin, and haue no Care the while of bridling their senses, but let them run on to all licentiousnes; nay, which is worse they continue so, til the end of their liues, without any remorse, out of a vaine presumption they shalbe saued because of some odd deuotions they exercise, then which what greater folly can there be, what greater blindnes? not to see how the diuel drawes them as it were bound hand and foote to hel. For example, you shal see many, (I speake it with greefe and shame enough) so addicted to the devotion of the Annunciat, as they would not omitt it for a world, (and 'tis com-

To serue the B. V. Mary. 167

commendable in them) but
marke how they abuse it; the mi-
raculous effects which they so
spread of it, makes them presume
the like; for what wil they say:
neuer tel me of Hel nor of the
paines thereof, though I sinne ne-
uer so much, I serue a Mistres
who hath both wil and ability to
helpe me out of it, and let me but
Confesse my sinnes at the houre
of my death, and I am sure of
heauen; see how these miserable
wretches talke; drawing a wrong
consequence from an Antece-
dent most true, that the B. Virgin
both can and wil succour her ser-
uants; but they must be such as
make due vse of her fauours, and
employ thē in working their sal-
uation: such indeed shce someti-
mes helps so efficaciously, as in
shipwrack

shipwrack she keepes then from perishing in the sea, and frees them from al dangers on land of enemyes, theeuers, and Murthers, and al this to bring them to amendment of their liues: But those who rather grow worse by it, or out of presumption of it seeke not to amend at al, for my part I hold their safeties desperat. Then there is a difference of sinners, for some sinne of deliberat wil, and make not due vse of their deuotion to the B. Virgin, nay, as I haue sayd before, euen abuse it to greater licentiousnes of life, and such are in a most dangerous estate. Others only sinne, out of humane frailty, and by giuing too much liberty to their senses, doing it with a remorse of Conscience, and greeuous desire to amend

& serue the B. V. Mary. 169

amend their faults , though they be neiglilent to put their good desires in excution: and for such, it is easier for them to dispose them selues for grace , and preuayle themselves of those Inspirations the B. Virgin procures them for the amendment of their liues , themselves , both the one and the other are to honour the B. Virgin, and reuerence her with al becoming reuerence , that she may obtayne for them of her B. sonne condigne penance for their sinns, & amendment of their life. Let them like wise endeauour to make themselves; partakers of that laudable deuotion of the Annunciat, since those who haue been of it, haue been in fine recompenced for it, and I exhort as wel the Iust and those of better life to

H

this

this, as also sinners and euil liuers; sithence if these find such benefit of it, how much more must they, who are intimate freinds as it were to God and his B. Mother; as those who are in deadly sinne, are capital enimies, as this story taken out of the Cronicles of the Friers Minors doth manifest.

A certaine Frier Minor of holy life, vsing to recommend himselfe vnto the prayers of euery one he mett; it happned he entering once into a towne; mett a woman there of euil fame, and indeed of as euil life, and desired her likewise to remember him in her prayers to Alm: God and his B. Mother; At which, quite astonished, she answered him, Alas father! what good wil my prayers
do

and serue the B. V. Mary: 171

do you, who am the wickedest
sinner in the world ? bee what
you wil, sayd he, your prayers
wil do me no hurt I am confident.
When behold a miraculous ac-
cident, the woman entring into
the Church, and Kneeling before
an Image of the B. Virgin to say
an *Aue Maria* for him, was ra-
uish't in extasy, and behold the
mother of God humbly supplica-
ting her sonne for him; and he
demanding of her why she would
harken to the prayers of an Ene-
meys, although it was for a freind
she prayed, Be therefore merciful
to her (sayd she agayne) and for
your freinds sake receiue her to
freind ship also. The poore wo-
man returning from her extasy,
hastned to find out the Religious
man, to whom with great won-

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der she recounted what had past, and hauing made a general Confession of al her sins, she liued there after a most exemplar life in the seruice of that great Patronesse of sinners the Queene of heauen.

Let al who serue her then', if they desire to please her, carefully avoid al mortal sinne, and pre-serue their hearts pure and innocent; so shal they likewise obteyne the fauour of Alm: God, since as the holy scripture sayes, they who loue purity of heart, infallibly shal haue the king for freind.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 173



*The fourth Condition requi-
sit in the seruants of the B.
Virgin, for the conserva-
tion of this purity of hart,
which is the frequentation
of the Sacraments, espe-
cially of that of Confession.*



ALTHOUGH the pro-
fession of being ser-
uants to the B. Vir-
gin, be a great stay
vnto vs from falling
into sinne; neuerthiesse, standing
on such slippery ground, with
this waight of flesh on vs incli-
ning

H 3

174 *A Method to loue*

ning vs to fal, we cannot but sometimes do it, and contract some blemish by it, and may need the wiping away of it. As for Mortal sinne, by the grace of Alm. God we may preserue our selues vn-
 touched by it; as many good Religious do euen to the vttermost period of their dayes; but for venial, it is impossible, nor is there any of Adams descendants, that at some time or other haue not falne into it. The Apostles themselves although adorn'd with richest sanctity, were not exempted from it, only the B. Virgin hath had this singular priuiledge aboue the rest, as the holy Church conceiues of her in her Office; *You are all faire O B. Mary, and there is no spot in you.* Now our B. Sauour for the cleansing vs from the stay-
 nes.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 175

nes both of venial & mortal sinne hath prouided vs of the remedie of the Sacrament of Confession. And so S. Bernard sayes : *Ama Confessionem, si affectas decorem.* Loue Confession, as thou louest to be faire; meaning that it is the imbellishment of a soule, and so certainly there is nothing that more efficaciously purges the soule from vice, then to frequent this holy Sacrament.

Al the Sacraments of the Church, according as the Council of Trent defines, were instituted by our Sauour Christ himselfe, and had their first origin from his sacred side, at what time both blood & water came issuing forth, and are so many rindets as it were, by which his abundant grace is deriued vnto vs. Let them

H 4 therefore

therefore who frequent them,
make account (especially this of
Confession) that they haue re-
course by it , to the ouer: flowing
fountaine of our Sauiours pre-
tious bloud , by vertue of which
their foules are wash't and clean-
sed from the foulnes of their sin-
nes : which the Apostle S. Iohn
doth insinuat where he sayes:
*The bloud of our Sauiour Christ pur-
ges vs of our finnes.* O how mer-
ciful and gracious hath God ben
to vs the whilst ? how excessiue
his loue , to giue vs so pretious a
remedy , by which as often as we
please we may be purged and cle-
ansed from our finnes : and as
often as we are dead in mortal
sinne, we may be reuiued and ray-
sed to life againe , passing from
the death of sinne vnto the life
of

and serue the B.V. Mary. 177

of grace, from vice to vertue,
from eternal paine vnto eternal
blisse.

Of all deformities, mortal sinne
is that, which renders a soule
most deformed, in so much as
could we but see a soule in state
therof, we should euen die for
horror, it would be a sight so
feareful and hideous: whereas no
sooner it hath been cleansed by
the sacrament of Penance, but it
produces againe a new beauty &
formosity. So S. Gregory the
great sayes: Could we but see a
soule made to the resemblance of
God, euen in *puris naturalibus*, we
should admire it to adoration, &
beleue the Creatours beauty
himselſe hardly superiour to it.
For which reason (sayes the lear-
ned Tilleman) God hath inclosed

H v it

it in this corps of clay, least it beholding it-self, should be in danger of that Luciferian pride, which was so many Angels perdition. And for this cause those ancient Fathers of the Ægyptian deserts in eleuating their mindes to their soules high^{nobility}, and taking the true altitude of their creatiōs, were as it were alienated from themselves; In so much (as we reade of S. Antony) as often as he was called on to pay the debt of nature either in food or sleep, or any such corporal necessity, he euen blush't for shame, that so noble a substance as the soule, should be interess'd in such base reckonings. Now if a reasonable soule be of it-selfe so beautiful, what great addition must it needs receiue from the Sacrament of Penance,

& serue the B.V. Mary. 179

Penance, which restoring it to its native luster, add to it besides, that of God Almightyes supernatural grace? Certainly there is no eloquence in the world can speak it sufficiently, no liuing imagination can conceiue the hundreth part of its excellence. The Sunne (sayes S. Chrysostome) with his cleare rayes doth not so illuminate the world as the Grace of Alm. God can do a soule. Which that of S. Catharine of Sienna wel declares; who hearing a Preacher once discoursing of the excellency thereof, and how exceedingly it beautified a soule, conceived an ardent desire to behold a soule in Grace, and aduantaged with all the beauties thereof; Full of this desire, she was no sooner departed from the sermon, but she hard

a voice from heauen saying vnto her: *Catherine, presently thou shalt see the fruite of thy desire*; and retiring her into her Oratory, she there besought God for the performance of his promise, and suddenly beheld a person of incredible Maiesty al Circled about with light and shining with clear splendours; at the sight of which, she was so rapt in admiration and reuerence, as she presently prostrated her selfe before its feete with intention to adore it, had it not with these words prohibited her: *Catherine forbear for I am not God, as thou imaginest? and who then?* answered the Saint; I am, sayd it, the soule of a certaine Murtherer you prayed for not long since in seeng me ledd to execution who being new cleansed

and serue the B.V. Mary. 181
fed in the fire of Purgatory, and
going al purified to heauen, after
I shal haue left you satisfied of
your desire by the commande-
ment of Alm. God. And after
this time, the holy Saint had a
particular in sight by Alm. God
bestowed vpon her, of the natu-
res of each soule, and she was
wont to affirme vnto her Glostly,
Father, that if he sawe but the
beauty of a soule, she was assured,
he would: spend 1000. & 1000.
liues for the sauing of one.

The grace of this holy Sacra-
ment of Penance hath a won-
drous vertue, not only to purifie
the soule confessant from the stai-
nes of sinne, but also to beautify
it with good inclinations, and
from a slaue of sinne and vn-
apt for good, to render it free &
expedite

expedite; which we wil declare by an example out of Cæsarius. There was a learned Diuine (say's he) exemplar in al vertue called Thomas, who approching to his end, saw in a corner of his chamber the diuel appearing in a fearful shape; to whom he with an vndanted couragc thus spake; What art thou there cruel beast, sayd he? tel me, I coniure the, what amongst Christians is the thing which afflicts the most? but he forbearing to answer him, the holy man iterating his admiration, in the name of God charged him to speake: when at last the diuel thus answered him; Know (sayd he) there is nothing in the Church of God afflicts vs more then the frequenting the Sacrament of Confession, seeing when

and serue the B.V. Mary. 183

a man is in mortal sinne, he is as it were bound hand and foote, wholly disabled from doing any good, and when he repayres to Confession those bonds are broken, and he is restored to liberty againe; and so certainly sinnes are nothing else but so many chaines which tye vs as it were vnto the gates of hel, and so the Priest in the act of Absolution sayes: *I absolve thee from thy sinnes*; and a mighty power the Confessours hath, or rather a mighty loue our Sauour hath of vs to instruct & furnish them with so great a power as they haue. We see, say the holy Fathers, when a Criminal confessed his sinnes vnto an' earthly Iudge, he is condemned for it, but the contrary happens at the Tribunal of the Church.

Church, where the Priest presides and represents the person of our Sauour Christ himselfe: For those who confesse, goe away wholly acquitted and absolved.

Al good Christians then, as soone as they are falne into mortal sinne, are presently to procure to purge themselues of the foule staine of it at the fountaine of Confession; and if we be so careful when the least spott appears vpon our garments, to washe it out; how much more careful ought we to be to washe out the blemishes of our soule? for the which, although Contrition may suffice accompanied with a firme purpose of Confession, not with standing who can secure his Conscience whether he hath had true Contrition or no, or that rather
it

and serue the B.V. Mary. 185

it hath not been a greefe lesse perfect for his sinnes proceeding rather from the feare of punishments then a true loue of God Almighty, as it ought to do; such as the Diuines cal *Attrition*, neither sufficient of it selfe to deliver vs from our sins, nor constitute vs in the state of Grace, nor consequētly to free vs from damnation should we dye in that state of minde; whereas but ioyne it with Confession, and it is abundantly sufficient, the Sacrament supplying al that was wanting to it of true Cōtrition. Who sees not then the vertue of this Sacrament, and how necessary it is for our saluation? For which cause, the seruants of Alm. God were euer exceeding careful to Confesse them euen of their lightest

test faults, especially ^{neare} ~~neare~~ the ^{howe} ~~howe~~ of their deaths, at which tyme, although they had led such Saint-like liues, as it hath pleased God to testifie it euen by miracle; yet being to approach to the soueraigne purity, they imagined could neuer be pure enough And so a certaine learned Authour sayes, that a soule in Grace at its separation from its body if it should but see the least blemish of venial sinnes adhearing to it, would be so ashamed of it, as rather the to appeare with it before the face of Alm. God, it would volūtarily plunge it self into Purgatory there to be cleansed from it; nay, which is more, wōderful, he sayes that should an Angel descend thither vnto it while it were suffering the sharpest and most exquisite

exquisite torments there, & putt it to its choice to go to heauen with some blemish of sinne vpon it, or remaine there purging from it til the day of doome; the soule without any demurr vpon it, would make election of the last, thereby to render it selfe more worthy the sight of God whom it loues so wel, who cannot endure any object of impurity. The purity of hart then being a thing of so singular recommendation with the Queene of heauen, let al who professe themselves her seruants seeke to purchase it, and purchasing it once embrace it with al their might; to which end lett them know, that according to the opinion of al, there is no more efficacious way to do it, then that of the Sacrament of
Confession.

Confession; the benefits of it are so many, that they are impossible to be reckoned vp; For those who confesse often, heape grace upon grace, purity on purity, beauty on beauty, and make themselves the greatest treasure of it in heauen; those who confesse often, haue a more vigilāt eye to the cōseruing of their cōscience in purity, which in the fountaine of penance they so lately purified, those who Cōfesse often haue a special care, not to fal into those sins for shame, from which so lately their Confessors help't them out; those who confesse often, make more easily the examen of their Consciences, and goe with lesse difficulty to Confession, and are better disposed to the receiuing of our Sauour Christ in the Sacrament

and serue the B.V. Mary. 189
ment of the Alas. In fine; those
who confesse often enioy both
day and night great tranquil-
lity of mind which only ac-
companies a pure Conscience,
and is the greatest blessing in the
world.

This the sacred Catechisme con-
firmes where it sayes; *Those who
holily and religiously receiue this ho-
ly Sacrament acquire by it a great
tranquillity of Conscience, accompa-
nied with as great content of mind
and hart.* But what needs other te-
stimoneis of this, than experiēce
it-selſe? How vnwillingly they
go to Confession, who haue their
conscience charged with a long
reckoning of sins? how ful of sad-
nes and anxiety? how heauie the
burthen of them seemes to be, til
being lightened of it at last by
Confession

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Confession, how great Consolation do they feele then in their soules? how chearful they are? & how embraced with the loue of God for which now they could be content to die, who before cared not to liue for it! and if the practise of this do often occurr, Oh! how happy doe they lead their dayes on earth euen as they were in another heauen: to participat of this so great a benefit no Christian if he *rightly* considered it; but would goe a thousand and a thousand miles, rather then want so great a commodity, how much the greater shame is it then for those, who vouchsafe not to stirr fower or fve paces out of their way, to discharge themselues of the burthen of their sinnes. And yet in how farr worse estate are those

& serue the B. V. Mary. 191

those, who remaine five or ten
yeares without this benefit, how
may we imagine do the Angels
in heauendeplore so great a retch-
lesnes? of this sort how many
wicked liuers are there, who pre-
tend some deuotion to the B. Vir-
gin, as saying their beades, fasting
on saturdayes in her honour, and
the like: who for the rest neuer
think of heauen, or of timely
repenting them for their sinnes.

Of whom what should we saie,
and of their cruelty to their owne
soules, whose cheifest content-
ment they so lightly prize? Cer-
tainly we could wishe they would
at least (since they make profes-
sion of seruing her) beseech the
B. Virgin amongst their other
deuotions, to obtaine for them
of her B. Sonne a true knowledge
and

and contrition for their sinns; which if they doe with a sorrowful hart indeed, without doubt she wil grant them their request, and it wil be amaine disposition for them to obtaine the diuine Grace, seeing (as the Diuines affirme) the workes of charity although done in mortal sinne, haue yet the force to dispose the sinner vnto Grace, and Consequently vnto eternal life. An example of which, it being full of rare document besides, out of the second part of the Frier Minors Chronicles we thought good to record.

Two Frier-Minors going from the Conuent of Paris in the depth of winter, were besides the dirty wayes so incommodated with continual showers of raine, as the
elder

& serves the B.V. Mary. 193

elder of the two towards the evening wholly tired out, sayd vnto his Companion; My deare brother, what shal we do? I am so weary that I am scarce able to stirr a foote; alas, Father, sayd the other, we cannot remaine heere in the midst of this foule weather and fowler wayes; why? answered the father againe, it seemes to me I spye a house some quarter of a league hence, where perhaps we may be lodged for God Alm^s sake; I know it wel, said the father, but it wil be ill coming thither for vs, the Maister of it being a wicked man, no freind to God, nor to his seruants, and such an enemy to himself, as for these 30. yeares (as the report goes) he hath neuer been at Confession; howsoever (sayd the

I Father

Father) let vs goe, for there is no remedy now, and God is neuer wanting to his seruants at such necessitous times as this; So they sett on towards the house, where being arriued, and asking a lodging for God Alm^s sake, the Mistres of the place moued with compassion to see them in such pitious plight, told them her husband was forth a hunting, and for her selfe she was desirous to accommodat them with al her hart, but if her husband came to haue notice of it, either of them should incurr his greeuous displeasure by it, she for receiuing them, and they for being receiued, but come what would she durst not deny them for God Alm^s sake, and had rather then fal into his displeasure, incurr
her

& serue the B. V. Mary. 195

her husbands by it a thousand times; so shee entertained them in a more remote part of the house, with the greatest secrecie and charitie she could; In the meane time; her husband returning from the chace, finding al things prepared against his cōming home, fate downe to supper, where he was plentiously serued, whilst the goodnes of his appetite equalled the goodnes of the prouision; his wife considering the wants of the poore Religious men, in comparifon of the plenty which was there, could not but expresse some sorrow for it in her countenance; which her husband obseruing, asked her wherefore she was so sad? and she a while excusing her selfe, at last he more & more importuning her, she plainly

I 2 could

tould him, vpon his promise he would not be offended with it; how she had entertayned those poore Religious men in their extreame necessity for God Alms sake, preferring by it the feare of God before the feare of him, and how whilst they by the fire side were plentifully feasting it, those poore soules pinched with hunger & cold were ready to starue to death, the cōpassion of whose incommodities with reflexion on their commodities the while, made her so sad and sorrowful in her minde: and hauing this discovered with teares in her eyes, her husband was so moued thereat, as he presently arose from the table, and commanding they should be fetcht into the roome, he himself went out to meete them, and wel-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 197
welcomed them with such signes
of affection, as for his owne mo-
ther he could not haue expressed
more, this moued the wonder of
al that were present there, but
much more that which follow-
eth; when he seeing their gar-
ments hang al frozen stiffe about
them, and their feete and leggs
chapt through the extremity of
cold, was so moued thereat, as he
presently seating them by the fire
caused a bath of hott water to be
brought, and he himselfe washed
their feete: then after he had a
while refreshed them there, he
comanded a chamber next his
owne to be prepared for them;
whither hauing conducted them
he addressing himselfe vnto the
father sayd; My good father, re-
solue me I beseech you in cur-
I ; tesy

tesy ; whether one who hath li-
ued al his life a greeuous sinner,
and yet hath neuer Confest him
his sinns, may possibly be saued?
There is no doubt , Sir , answered
the Religious man, but who-
foeuer with requisite penance for
his sinns satisfies the iustice of
Alm. God , may arriue at last to
his saluation , for so God hath
sayd ; *At what time soeuer a sinner
shal. repent him of his sinnes , he
should liue* : If it be so, replied the
Gentleman, for Gods sake oblige
me so much as to heare my
Confession; the good father ex-
ceeding weary and oppress
with sleepe , considering it a
worke of much time , to heare
the Confession , of such a one as
he , encouraging him in his good
desires , desired him to deferr it
til

and serue the B.V. Mary. 199
til morning, when he might at
better leifure examine his Con-
science, and confider more matu-
rely of what he was to do; but
who can assure me, answered the
Gentleman, to liue til the mor-
ning? but for that, as it pleaseth
God, and so he retired him to his
rest; meane while the Religious
man moued with an extraordina-
ry sollicitud of this his new Con-
verts saluation, was no sooner at
priuacy in his chamber, but ca-
sting himself vpon his knees, he
besought Alm. God to dispose al
that concerned him for his grea-
ter good; and thereupon he tooke
himself to his bed; where in the
profoundnes of his sleepe, he be-
held in vision, the Angels and di-
uels at great debat about the soule
of this Gentleman newly decea-
sed;

fed; the one challenging it to be theirs, the other denying it; the diuels alleadging for their side the many and greuous crimes he had cōmitted in his life; the Angels for theirs, some flight and few good workes which he had done, but with soe litle successe as the Iudge was euen vpon the point of giuing iudgement for his condemnation, when his Angel Guardian interposed and sayd: I beseech your diuine Maiestie, remember (what I had almost forgot) the charitable entertainment he gaue to those Religious men but yester-night; and I trust it wil more then incite you to pardon him; at this the Iudge demurring, at last in consideration of this one act of his, he gaue sentence for his saluation, and so his
accu-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 201

accusers departed frustrat of their intents. Heer the vision vanished, and the Religious man starting out of his sleepe, called to his Companion saying: My brother, my brother, the Gentleman of this house is dead, and which is more, is saued; and heere he related to him the whole progresse of his vision. Hereupon they both rose and calling to them of the house, aduertised them of what had happened, telling them for certaine that the Maister of the place was dead: at this, al were wonderfully amazed, and his wife the most afflicted woman in the world, not so much for his temporal death, as his eternal, which with good cause she feared, til the Religious assured her that he was saued, and that by the same

I v mea-

meanes he came to the knowledge of his death, by the same he vnderstood of his eternal life; So a great part of her sorrow being taken away, the rest she bestowed vpon his Obsequies, al that either knew his life or death, admiring in it the wonderful mercies of Alm. God.

From this Example let sinners take Instruction, to be alwayes charitable to the poore; & though their sinnes be neuer so many, yet neuer to despaire of the sweet goodnes of Alm. God, but chei-fully let them learne from hence, to correspond to the Inspirations of Alm. God, and preuayle themselves of the occasions offered them by fauourable heauen, for their conuersions & eternal good: for so did this Gentleman both in
wil.

& serue the B. V. Mary. 203
wil intreating the Religious by
the Inspirement of Alm. God, &
in conceiuing a firme purpose
for the Confessing of his sinnes,
which nothing but death could
hinder the performance of.

*The Continuation of the
Fourth Condition; which
is the frequentation of the
Sacrament of the Eucha-
rist.*



As the seruants of the
B. Virgin then to
preserue their harts
and mindes in puri-
ty, ought often to
Confesse: so likewise to increase
it

it in their foules, the more to illustrate their mindes, & vnite their harts more neare to Alm. God, ought they to frequent the Sacrament of the Eucharist, where God is gloriously & ful of al sweetnes imparting of himself, no other-wise then he doth vnto the B. foules in heauen. And who can imagine the hundreth part of the greatnesse, maruailes, and superabundant aduantages, which accrew to those who receiue this ineffable Sacrament, much lesse expresse it in their discourse and wordes? for the other Sacramēts, conferr grace 'tis true, to those who worthily participat of them; but this is the fountaine of grace, from whence it springs, which consequently in more plentious manner is communicated heare;
the

& serue the B.V. Mary. 205

the others come from God, but in this is God himselfe, the Author of al grace and of al the Sacraments, and the source of al our good; others are meanes to bring vs vnto God, but this is the End and brings God vnto vs; al the sanctity of the rest only helping to dispose to the sanctity of this. With good reason then S. Dionysius the Areopagite, stiles it, *the perfectiue and conseruatiue* Sacrament, seeing it is the perfection and consummation of al the rest.

Amongst al the motiues that should incite vs to the frequentation of this B. Sacrament, none, me thinks, should be more efficacious, then our B. Ladyes so often frequenting it, by which with a zeale incredible she dayly (as it were)

were) en-wombed her B. Sonne againe ; according to the great Albert, S. Antonine, Sotus, and the learned Suarez; nor can any without strange temerity call it in question, who but considers her (as she was indeed the light and paterne of those primitiue Times , in which the B. Sacrament was so frequented, as Saint Luke writes of them; *They perseuered in the Temple in prayers and the Communion of breaking bread.*

And as for the Apostles , its certaine they al were Preists and Bishops ordained and establis-
hed by *Iesus Christ* and Conse-
quently according to their func-
tions consecrated and receiued
the Body of our Lord : *I haue re-
ceined of our Lord that which I haue
giuen you ,* (sayes the great Apo-
fle.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 207

ſtyle S. Paul of himſelfe; And S. Andrew answered reſolutly to the Proconſul exhorting him to Idolatry : *I ſacrifice dayly to the God omnipotent, who is the only true God; not the ſmoke of incenſe, nor the fleſh and bloud of beaſts, but the immaculat Lamb, of whoſe fleſh and bloud al the faithful do eate and drink that which was immolated, yet remayning entire and aliuē.* S. Albert a deuout ſeruant of the B. Virgin deſcends more to particulars, and ſayes, that S. Iohn was her ordinary Preiſt, from whoſe hands ſhe communicated and receiued the Sacrament, that ſhe continued this deuotion al her life, and at her death procured to haue miniſtred, vnto her. But who can imagine the exceſſiuenes of her deuotion in receiuing it? Since if
ſome.

were) en-wombed her B. Sonne againe ; according to the great Albert , S. Antonine, Sotus, and the learned Suarez; nor can any without strange temerity call it in question, who but considers her (as she was indeed the light and paterne of those primitiue Times , in which the B. Sacrament was so frequented, as Saint Luke writes of them; *They perseuered in the Temple in prayers and the Communion of breaking bread.*

And as for the Apostles , its certaine they al were Preists and Bishops ordained and establis-
hed by *Iesus Christ* and Conse-
quently according to their fun-
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the Body of our Lord : *I haue re-
ceined of our Lord that which I haue
giuen you ,* (sayes the great Apo-
stle.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 207

stle S. Paul of himselfe; And S. Andrew answered resolutely to the Proconsul exhorting him to Idolatry : *I sacrifice dayly to the God omnipotent, who is the only true God; not the smoke of incense, nor the flesh and bloud of beasts, but the immaculat Lamb, of whose flesh and bloud al the faithful do eate and drink* *et which was immolated, yet re-*
uing entire and alive. S. Albert. without seruant of the B. Virgin ascends more to particulars, and sayes, that S. Iohn was her ordinary Preist, from whose hands she communicated and receiued the Sacrament, that she continued this deuotion al her life, and at her death procured to haue ministred, vnto her. But who can imagine the excessiuenes of her deuotion in receiuing it? Since if
some.

some Saints were so deuout when they came vnto it, as they rauished the beholders in an admiration, can we doubt but she surpassed them in it, who surpassed them by such infinite degrees in the liuely apprehension and vnderstanding of the thing. S. Catherin of Sienna when she would expresse to her Confessarius the ardent desire she had to communicate of this Sacrament, would only say she hungred, and he vnderstood her meaning strait, and hauing receiued it according to her desire, she would remaine some five or sixe houres afterwards in extasie. Our S. Francis did so burne, nay euer dye with the desire thereof, as those who beheld him in the Act of Communicating, were astonished at his

and serue the B.V. Mary. 209

his seruour in it, and none could behould him without hauing the fire of deuotion enkindled in the-
selues the while he seemed so inebriated with it and transported with the ioy, and so great was his reuerence of it, as only it was that, which made him abstaine from Preist-hood, when once beseeching Alm. God by ardent prayer to declare vnto him what his pleasure was in that particular, an Angel appeared vnto him with a violl in his hand ful of pure and christallin liquor saying vnto him; Behold, Francis, those who duely administer the B. Sacrament, ought to be as cleane in hart, and as free from blemish in their soules, as this liquour is from al foulnes & impurity. With which apparition he was so confirmed

firmed in his humility as they could neuer induce him to any further Orders then he had.

And S. Clare of the same time with him, had no lesse deuotion to this Sacrament; as it appears in that shee neuer approched vnto it, but with her eyes drowned in teares, whilest her hart was burning in deuotion. But what wonder that men goe to it with so profound submission and reuerence, when euen the Angels & diuels adore and reuerence it.

The B. Brother Stephen (as it is recorded in the Chronicles of our Order, celebrating Masse one day with great guift and deuotion, the Acolothite who assisted him falling a sleep, hauing been ouer-watched the night before; Two deuout women being present

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present at Masse, beheld at the time of Eleuation two Angels in most beautilous shapes with torches in their hands performing the Office the while of him that slept; and when the Eleuation was done, after their most profound reuerences they disappeared; This to their great admiration these deuout women obserued.

But what wonder if the Angels honour and reuerence their eternal King, when euen the Diuels themselves euen do it, as is manifest in the storye following: In Germany there was a certaine Virgin possessed by the Diuel, who before this lamentable accident, was of rare vertue and singular piety; It happened once as she was issuing forth of
the

the Church with diuers others, a Preist passed by, bearing the B. Sacrament to the sicke, when all the people fell on their knees reuerently adoring it, except a certaine Iew who was there amongst the rest; which this Virgin spying she approached vnto him, and striking him sayd; thou wicked miscreant, why dost thou not adore the Creatour and Lord of all? The Iew replyed (moued with the indignity of the thing,) we are obliged to the acknowledgement but of one God alone, and why then would you haue me reuerēce this, of which there are, as many as there are Hosts consecrated in the world? the possessed person hearing this, tooke a Siue, and holding it before his eyes, bidd him regard the
the

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the Sunne , and then ask't him,
how many Suns he sawe ? whe
ther as many as there were bea-
mes that came through the siue,
or only one , from whence al
those beames were deriued?
thinke me not so simple , sayd the
Iew , as not to know there is but
one only Sunne ; more simple
thou art then , answered she
again , to beleue that we haue
more Gods then one , though so
many Hosts as thou seest euery
where deriue themselves from
his diuinity ; and at this the Iew
confounded left the place.

The B. Virgin not only adored
this B. Sacrament , on earth,
but now in heauen actually Con-
tinues her Adoration ; which we
may confirme by a storye taken
out of Vincentius his Mirrour
Historial

Historial the. 17. booke, confirmed by diuers other Authors of worthy credit: There was, sayes he, a Curat of euil life, addicted to his pleasures, and one who studied more to flay and kil his flock, then to feed them; It happened in his parish at the same tyme there-fel sicke a riche Gentleman of prime quality, and a poore widow of a vertuous life; the Vicar choosng rather to visit the Gētleman (as one from whom there was some what to be hoped for) left the widow without help abandoned: and after he had dispatch't with him, slightly hearing his Confession and administering the other Sacramēts, yet he remained lingering there so long impertiēntly flattering the Gentleman with hope of life, though
he

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he euen saw death in his Countenance, (only in hope of some temporal benefitt) vntil the widow mindful of her eternal good; sent for him being almost in her last Agonie: but he sticking fast there, in hope of gaine, could not be drawne from thence: which his Vicar perceiuing, moued with compassion; alassee Sir, sayd he, suffer not this poore woman to dye thus destitute of help, but at least send me thither: if you wil not goe your selfe: Goe, if you wil, sayd he, for my part I wil not leaue this Gentleman where there is hope of some what to be gott, to visit a begger where there is nothing but misery: hereupon the Vicar went with the B. Sacrament for her Viaticum, to visit this infirme creature, poor indeed

indeed of worldly riches, but riche in heauenly, without which al is pouerty: and he was no sooner arriued at the doore, where the poore soule lay only vpon a litle straw, but he beheld the glorious Queene of heauen, accompanied with innumerable troopes of Angels and Virgins, assisted at her happy departure, at the sight of which the Vicar suspēded in his thoughts a while, whether he should enter or no, at last reflecting from his owne vnworthines on the dignity of him who was in the Sacrament which he brought with him, he confidently entred in, when the B. Virgin and al her Glorious trayne with humble reuerence adored it, and presently vanished away. When the good Vicar in extreme consolation

solation approched to the Couch where the poore widow lay, and hauing heard her Confession and communicated her, the happy soule presently loosened from its mortal bones, tooke flight immediatly to heauen.

In the meane while, things succeeded cleane cōtrary at the riche mans house; whither the Vicar was no sooner returned, but he beheld the Gentlemans bed, all incircled in with ougly black spirits, with horrible noyse, skree-kings, and roarings affrighting of his soule, whilest he cried out in horrible dismay: helpe, helpe, my freinds, these wicked spirits are haling me, and with their gripes they euen presse me to the hart: alas! I am a lost and miserable man: and at last, whilst the

Curat and the rest were labouring in vaine to comfort him, his aking soule weary of those momentary and painful gripes, issuing out of its body was received by those Feinds, and carried where was nothing but eternal torments.

Imagine but what impressions the whilest the concurrancy of these two Visions made in the heart of the good Vicar, and how deuoutly afterwards he reuerenced the B. Sacrament, hauing seene with what deuotion the B. Virgin did it, and al her heauenly traine; At least, the professed seruants of this B. Virgin ought to make their profit of this Example, and learne from thence to reuerence the B. Sacrament; and also to haue the often recei-
uing

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uing of it in highe esteeme; notwithstanding the friuolous opinions of some, who hold it an irreuerence the often frequenting of it; not considering that it is stiled our *dayly bread*; that S. Luke and S. Denis the Areopagite affirmes it to haue been the Custom of the Primitiue Christiāns, to receiue it dayly with incredible Consolation. For their better instruction, let them heare Saint Ambrose exhorting to the frequent receiuing it: *The seruants of Alm. God, (sayes he) receiue this bread dayly, since dayly thou hast need of it for thy Comfort refreshment, and purging thee from thy sinnes;* And the Angelical Doctour S. Thomas sayes, That whosoever experienceth an increase of grace and deuotion by their of-

ten receiuing it ; both may and ought to frequent it still , and that although . it be Commendable sometimes for humility to abstaine from it , Yet it is more Commendable out of loue to receiue it often. As witnesseth that example of S. Bonauenture , who in his yonger yeares at his first entrance into the Order of the Frier-Minors , out of the profoundnes of his humility would oftentimes forbear to cōmunicate ; vntil hearing Masse one day , it pleased Alm. God to send him a particle of the Blessed Host by the hands of Angels to communicate withal , by this singular fauour both rewarding his humility , and encouraging him to more frequent receiuing it.

And

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And heere we wil cease all further Discourse of these Conditions requisit in the seruants of the Blessed Virgin, and treat of the due reuerence which wee owe to her; and first we wil declare the Excellence thereof.

Heere endeth the first Part.



K ; THE



The second Part.

*Of the Excellency of those Re-
uerences We are to exhibit
in honour of the Queene
of Heauen.*

CHAPITRE I.



AMONGST al the
most noble and ex-
cellent seruices ap-
pertaining to the
diuine honour, that
Adoration which the Diuines call
Latria, and which is only appro-
priat to God in regard of the in-
finit.

& serue the B. V. Mary. 223

finities of his Maiesty: holdes the first ranke and place. This adoration according to S. Iohn Damascene, consists in an interiour Act by which the Creature testifies his submission vnto his Creatour, by some exteriour signe either of vncouering the head, bowing the knee, inclining the body, or the like. With this supreme sort of Adoration the three Kings adored the Infant Iesus in his Mothers armes; *And entring the house* (sayes S. Mathew) *they found the Infant with Mary his mother, & falling on the ground, they adored him* words which excellētly wel declare the greatnes of this adoration; by which the Kings and Monarks of the earth humbly bow the head and knee vnto the King and Monarke of the heauens.

K 4

Now,

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Now to speake of the adoration proper to the B. Virgin, the next degree to that of God, himselfe, the Diuines distinguish it by the name of *Hyperdulia* from the rest by which al creatures both in heauen and earth count it as honour to adore the sacred **Queene** of heauen.

According to the opinion of some Diuines, God had no sooner created the Angels, but he let them vnderstand, how his B. Sonne was one day to become man, and this man should be their God.

Whereupon the B. Spirits with regard vnto the time, honoured him as such, and consequently (as Suares sayes in following Saint Thomas his opinion) they odored his Mother as her who
was

and serue the B.V. Mary. 225

was to inuest him in mortal flesh.

And 'tis an approued veritie of al the Doctours and the cheife of them al S. Paul ; - that the Sonne of God being come into the world , al the Angels came to adore him. So (sayes he) *when he sent his first borne sonne into the world, he sayd ; Let al the Angels of God adore him : And S. Bonauenture and other deuout writers saye, that when the Infant Iesus was borne in the Stable , al the Angels in their seueral Quiers came to adore him, and that perhaps visibly in humane shapes, the more to honour his Humanity ; After which they did their seueral reuerences to his B. Mother, the one and the other singing diuine and melodious Canticles of prayse.*

K 5 Now

Now if the B. Spirits with such profound reuerēce adored the B. Virgin while she was yet resident in the world; what excessiue honours may we imagine do they render her now in heauen, where next to God she holds the second place? invested with incomparable glorie at the right hand of her B. Sonne? For my part I am of opinion, that their most ordinary exercise is to honour the Sonne & Mother with incessant adoration; and so we read how S. Iohn rauished in extasye beheld the Angels incircling the Throne of God, and falling on their faces before it adoring the B. Trinity, and the sacred Virgin, daughter of the Eternal Father, Mother of the Sonne, and spouse of the holie Ghost: by
which

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which doth clearly appeare the excellency of this adoration, both *Latria*, and *Hyperdulia*, exhibited by al the Court of heauen vnto their King and Queen.

If then these glorious spirits honour with so soueraigne and magnificent a kind of Adoration the Mother of Alm. God, with greater reason ought we to honour her, by how much greater her fauours and graces haue been to vs, then to them. Let vs then honour her with al possible reuerence, to shew our selues grateful vnto her for her benefits: Of which we reade a rare and excellent Example in *Scala celi*; and it is this. A certaine holy Monke in England being much deuoted to the Queene of heauen, and amongst other his deuotions v-
sing.

sing often to salute her with profound reuerence, and bow downe as often as he hard her name pronounced, this holy ^{man} ~~name~~ through extremity of age becoming so feeble as he scarce could moue himselfe or so much as stirre him in his bed, the Abbot assigned him one to attend on him in his chamber; but he not being able to be alwayes present to his occasions, it happened that once in his absence he desirous to remoue himselfe, and hauing twice or thrice attempted it in vaine, at last hauing recourse vnto his prayers beseeching the B. Virgins assistance, behold she sodainly appeared to him, waited on by a faire traine of Virgins, two of which by appointment set him in that posture which he desired; when

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when the B. Virgin, after she had most sweetly comforted him (as a pledge of her deare acceptance of his deuotion) added vnto his terme of life twenty yeares, and restored him to his perfect health againe. A strange fauour, which cōferr'd not so much vnto the corporal vigour of the man, as it did to his spiritual in deuoutly seruing her.

But in the laudable exercise hereof, we are not so much to regard the ^{out}ward comportsment of the body, as the inward disposition of the mind in framing a deuout conceipt of the B. Virgin, imagining her present as often as we exhibit to her any corporal reuerence, and beholding vs the while with a deare regard, whereby this one deuotion will
become

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become more familiar to vs, and our remembrance of her more deare and cordial, so as we shal take pleasure to speake with her and of her, on al occasions, and more confidently preferr our petitions to her in our necessities; And this affection whosoever shal conceiue of her in his mind, is in a most happy estate & may wel presume of his saluation, and to be one of the number of the elect; whence he cannot but experience an incredible ioy of minde, since (according to a certaine graue Authour:) *If thou feele in thy hart (sayes he) a singular affection and deuotion to the glorious Virgin, it is a signe of thy Prædestination to eternal life, and thou mayst wel be glad and reioyce at it.*

These holie motions and pious
affects.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 231

affects of loue & reuerence were found in that deuout woman, of whom it is recorded in *Scala celi*; That being of noble birth, though fortune were wanting to her nobility; and hauing two daughters, whom shee carefully had educated in deuotion to the B. Virgin and the seruice of Alm. God; It chanced at last that their poverty was soe great, as they had nothing to sustaine their life, nor defend them from the extremity of pouerty; at which the mother exceedingly afflicted, had recourse one day vnto the Church, where before an Image of the B. Virgin deuoutly kneeling down, she with a voice often interrupted with her sobs and sighes, in this manner deuoutly supplicated her: O most holy Virgin, the refuge
of

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of such miserable creatures as my selfe; behold my two daughters here which it hath pleased Alm. God to bestow on me being brought vnto extreme necessity, whom now I resigne ouer vnto your care and motherly Prouidence, since mine no longer can auayle them; accept them then, and prouide for them as you see best, since al humane protection fayleth mee. Hauing finished her supplication, and being ready to depart the Church; behold a yong man of rauishing feature (wee may wel imagine some Angel sent from heauen) presented her with a hundred poundes saying; This money, Lady, I haue long owed to your deceased husband, pardon my so long delaying the payment of it; So he departed, and she vnto her home; where,
with

& serue the B. V. Mary. 233

with the money she made prouision what was necessary for the adorning her daughters according to their quality; which made the world (euer inclined to imagine and speake the worst) report them to haue by lesse chaste wayes arriued at that plēty which it saw they had : the noble mother no sooner had notice hereof , but with teares in her eyes , calling her daughters to her , she sayd vnto them ; My daughters, go to the B. Virgin , vnder whose patronage you are , and commend your fame and reputation vnto her, who now is more concerned in it then I , to fetch you faire & clearly off againe; they did so, & with al the attestations as deuotion could suggest, they beseeched their diuine Mistresse , to releue

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leiuē them in their fame, as ſhe
had in their pouerty; neither was
it in vaine, for in ſhort time after,
they became ſo vertuouſly repor-
ted of, as the Prince of the coun-
trei moued by the common fame
that went of them, conſtituted
them Abbeſſes of two ſeuerall
Monaſteries of his foundation.



How

How acceptable to the Blessed Virgin these reuerences & adorations are.

C H A P. II.



HERE is none so ignorant that doth not know, that the more we honour where it is deserued, the more we ingratiate our selues with the honoured. This supposed, we hauing in the precedent chapter declared the B. Virgins meriting in the highest kinde, this sort of Adoration which we call *Hyperdulia*, consequently our honouring

honouring her therby cannot but be most grateful and acceptable to her. It is an exercise, as we haue insinuated, practised by the Angels themselves in heauen and who soeuer practises it on earth, becomes (as it were) by it, equale vnto them; Angels of earth in honouring and reuerencing the soueraigne *Queene* of heauen. Neither are we to imagine that honour we exhibit vnto her here, lesse grateful vnto her, then that which they do there; nay, perhaps there are some men on earth so zealous in her seruice, who acquit them so wel of their deuotions and with such vigour of spirit goe reuerencing her, that their seruices to her heere, are more grateful then theirs here, and consequently in
their

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their reward of glory also they
shal out strip then farr.

Dul-sighted as we are then,
not to see of how great glorye we
depriue our selues, when we en-
deauour not in al we may, to
please the B. Virgin in honou-
ring her. Certainly, to fast, to
watch, to weare hayrcloth, say
our Beads, Offices, or such deuo-
tions, are very meritorious and
pleasing vnto her; but it is im-
possible for al the learning and
eloquence of the Quire of Sera-
phins, to expresse vnto the life
the infinit gladnes and extreme
pleasure she receaues from these
Adorations proceeding from the
interior of the minde, and ac-
companied with the respectiue
comportment of the exterior.

Besides, al the Angels and the
Celestial

Celestial Court do take particular contentment in the honour and reuerence exhibited to their foueraigne *Queene*; for if earthly Courtiers reioyce when any new honour redounds vnto their Prince, how much more reioycing may we imagine to be in heauen, when they see their Princeesse so honoured heere? and of this reioycing the B. Trinitie hath its part, when it beholds her reuerenced, in whom they haue lodged al their supreme and singular delights; the Father reioyces to see his daughter so honored, the Sonne his Mother, and the holy Ghost his Spouse.

Let al men then, of what estate, sexe, or condition they be, with al diligence and sollicitud procure
to

& serue the B. V. Mary. 239

to honour the Glorious and euer
B. Virgin Mary, with al beco-
ming reuerence; especially since
the honour due to her, redounds
vnto her B. Sonne, as the honour
done to Saints doth to God who
made them so. In honouring the
B. Virgin then, as the most ex-
cellent of creatures, we honour
God her Creatour, confessing al
those excellencyes we honour
her for, proceeding from his li-
berality vnto her, and thanking
and prayfing him for making a
creature of our owne Condition
so worthy and excellent; besides,
the honour and seruices done
vnto the Mother for the Sonns
regard, the Sonne takes as done
to him, and proceeding from the
loue and respect we beare him,
nay, which is more, the deuotion
towards

towards the Mother encreases the devotion towards the sonne, in that she (as most true vnto his honour (referrs al vnto it that is offered her , and leade them vnto him , who addresse themselues vnto her. Iust so then , as in honouring and glorifying the B. Virgin , we do but honour and glorify God, so we in placeing our Confidence in her , but place it in God himselfe , for what is it to confide in him , but to confide in those meanes which he hath prouided vs for our saluation ; and amongst al the meanes one of the most efficacious is to Commend our selues vnto her patronage, as we are instructed by the holy Church in that her Antiphon : *Spes nostra salue : eia ergo aduocata nostra illos tuos misericordes*

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ricordes oculos ad nos conuerte: Haile
O our hope, and O our aduocate
Conuert your eyes of mercy tow-
ards vs. And that great light of the
Church S. Augustine. sayes to the
same effect: *You are the only hope of*
sinners, & frō you, ô Glorious Virgin.
We expect pardon of our sinns, &
recompence for our good works.

Knowing then for certaine, that
in honouring the B. Virgin, we
do but honour God, we are often
to procure to honour her, and
both day and night offer vp vnto
her our reuerēces, especially in
the night when the time is more
silent and more fitt for our deuo-
tions. This how grateful it is vnto
her, she her self declared to a cer-
taine Capuchine of our order, one
most deuout vnto her. This good
Religious man had a laudable cu-
stome profoundly to incline vnto

L her

her a hundred tymes a day, til ha-
uing some special charge of the
Conuent, the performance of
which exacted much time of him,
not able to Comply with both,
he cutt-off one halfe of his deuo-
tions, & diminished them vnto
fifty tymes : Now it happened
that one day whilst he was bu-
sily imployed in his pious exer-
cises, the B. Virgin appeared vn-
to him, inuested with most glo-
rious ornaments, wearing a riche
mantle ouer them, with only one
halfe of it embroydered with
starrs; and addressing her speech
vnto him she sayd, how comes
it, my sonne, thy loue is growne
so cold in thee? that hauing be-
gun to imbellish this mantle with
so many bright shiuing starrs,
thou hast giuen ouer and left the
rest

Of seruice the B.V. Mary. 243

rest vndone? it is a worke so grateful vnto me the performance of it; as nothing can bee more vngateful vnto me then the neglect of it; wherefore as you respect my loue, finish your deuotions as you haue wel begun, and so vanished away leaving the good Religious man making his profit of her so mild reproofe, & renewing his ancient deuotions agayne, he exercised them vnto the end of his life, in that full number he began withal.

And let none imagine this a deuotion only for women or the simpler and vulgar sort, for al are equally obliged to honour her, of what sexe, estate, or condition soeuer they be; the Patriarkes & Prophets (as the Diuines affirme) acknowledged her worth, and re-

L 2 uerenced

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uerenced her for it thousands and thousands of yeares, before she was borne into the world: But what do I talke of Patriarkes and Prophets, when the Angels themselves at the first instant of their creation, beholding her in the Eternal Word, humbly reuerenced and adored her, as one that should one day be their Queene in heauen, and be the mother of their King on earth. And what should we say more? euen God himselfe become man was obedient vnto her commands, and obserued her with al filial loue and reuence.

To descend now to the Christians of the Primitiue Church, the Apostles reuerenced her dedicated Temples to her seruice, erected Altars to her, and according

and serue the B.V. Mary. 245

ding to the opinions of some cō-secrated to her the famous house of Loretto. But omitting these, let vs come to the Potentates of the world ; how many Emperours, Kings, and soueraigne Bishops haue there been , who haue reuerently taken their Crownes of their heads , and offered them at her feete?

What titles of prayse and honour by the Doctors of the Church haue anciently been bestowed vpon her by S. Hierome, S. Augustine, S. Chrysostom, and innumerable others? how Diuinely hath S. Thomas spoken in her prayse? how deuoutly S. Bonauenture? and how affectionately Albert the Great , in humble acknowledgement of the learning which hereceiued from her?

L 3 Let

Let vs fixe vpon Alexander de Hales amongst the rest, as one singularly deuoted vnto her, and recount the motiue he had to leaue the world, and inrol himselfe in the seruice of our Sauour Christ vnder the banner of S. Francis of Assisium.

This Alexander of Hales being English by nation, was of a sublime spirit, and of singular erudition, the first professor of Theologie in the Vniuersitie of Paris, & one so affectionatly deuoted to the B. Virgin, as he made a vowe, neuer to refuse any thing that should be asked him in her name; A certaine Gentle woman vnderstanding this, perswaded the Bernardines to make their vse of it by winning him to their Order, and illustrating it by so great a light.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 247
light of learning , which they
resolved to doe , and repairing to
him they made their approaches
a farr off , discoursing of learning
and deuotion ; but God Alm. per-
mitted not , that at that time they
should come neerer to him ; the
Gentle - woman vnderstanding
what was done, had recourse vnto
the Frier Preachers next, anima-
ting them and putting them in
the way to make him one of their
Order as she done the Bernardi-
nes before ; which was attempted
also by them , & iust as they were
putting him to his vowe , by
chance two Frier Minors coming
in, one of them diuinely inspi-
red thus sayd vnto him ; Alexan-
der , it is highe time for you to
with draw your selfe from those
vanityes which haue abused you

so long; wherefore in the name of God and his B. Mother I coniure you to take the habit of S. Francis, for I know his Order hath need of such as you are; Alexander touched with these words as by the finger of the holy Ghost, and remembring the vow he had made, answered him presently, Goe you hence good fathers, and I wil instantly follow to the full effecting of your desires; and so he did, taking on him the holy habit, til being in his probation he was grieuously tempted to cast it off agayne, by reason of some austerities he could not vndergoe so wel; and iust as he was vpon the point of doing it, behold S. Francis appeared vnto him in his sleepe, bearing on his shoulders a heauie Crosse, with which

and serue the B. V. Mary. 249

which he endeauoured to clime a
stipehil; at which he was so mo-
ued with compassion, as he offe-
red him his seruice to helpe him
vp with it; wherupon the Saint
beholding him with an angrie
eye, goe offer thy seruice (sayd
he) to suche weaklings as thy
selfe; for if thou canst not carry
thine that is so light, how canst
thou help me to beare my hea-
uier one? the Novice perceiuing
strait his mind from this his re-
prehension, resolved to continue
in the Order, not withstanding
al the difficulties thereof, and
concluded there was no other
waye to heauen, then by bearing
the Crosses which are offered vs.

L v

That

*That the quality of Mother
of God obliges both men
and Angels to the adoring
of her.*

C H A P. III.



A MONG al dignities,
graces, greatnesse,
and prerogatiues,
with which Alm.
God hath honored
the B. Virgin, there is none more
highe and sublime, then that of
being Mother of God, it surpas-
sing al of which any creature can
be capable; surmounts the hea-
uens, and the celestial Hierar-
chies,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 249
chies, comes neere to diuine, im-
mense, and incomprehensible, &
in fine goes beyond al that can
be express't by words, or concei-
ued by any Angelical or humane
thought. This S. Augustine in
the beginning of his book of the
B. Virgins Assumption, doth in-
timate, where he sayes : *There is*
no hart that conceiue, or tongue that
can expresse the effect of this grace
and dignity. And S. Bernard in di-
uers places and diuers manners
aymes at the expression of this
great dignity. S. Anselme in his
Treatise of the B. Virgins magni-
tuds sayes; that next to the being
God, there is no dignity in hea-
uen or earth can equal hers : *To*
say only (sayes he) of the B. Virgin,
that she is Mother of God, is a thing
that exceeds al sublimity, which next
to

to God can be said or imagined. From hence the holy Fathers inferr, that the title of being Mother of God, is the fountaine from whence do flow al her other graces and prerogatiues ; for so , say they, whence was it, that from al eternity she was in a particular māner predestinat ; because she was to be the Mother of God. Why was she sanctified by the holy Ghost in her Mothers wombe ? to be the more worthy receptacle of the Sonne of God. Why in her Conception was she exempted from original sinne ? that the eternal Word might from her body take immaculat flesh. Why was she exalted aboue al the Thrones & celestial Hierarchies ? but because she was the Mother of God, who is the soueraigne King of heauē & earth.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 253

earth. Whence in fine, is it, that the Princes of heaven and earth, nay, euen of Hel it selfe, bow downe and do reuerence at mention of her name, but only because she is Mother to the supreme Lord of al, to whom al do homage, and in whose presence al the great ones that are, shrinke vp to nothing, and not appeare at al. O wonderful greatnes of this highe and excellent dignity bestowed vpon a simple Virgin! Who is not astonished, who is not alienated from his senses with admiration? to be at once a mother, and a Virgin! to containe in the narrow inclosure of her wombe, him whom the heauens with al their height & latitud can not containe! to be Mother of the most deare delights of the
Eternal

Eternal Father, and the most glorious objects of Angels, and finally (which is the most prodigious of al) to haue produced her Creatour, and brought her Father forth. These are things aboue al capacity, rauishing nature with astonishment and wonder, so as with good reason the holy Church sayes of her: *Nature admired, when you brought forth that holy one, who brought forth you.*

The B. Virgin then merits in being Mother of God, al imaginable honour from one creature to another, and in particular that which the Diuines intitule *Hyperdulia*, which also admits of a subdiuision, according to Suarez, into superiour & inferiour; with the inferiour those are honored, who haue some particular excellence

and serue the B.V. Mary. 255

lence aboue the rest, as to S. Iohn Baptist, & the Apostles, for their eminency of place, to S. Francis for the singular testimony of his sanctity giuen by Alm. God in the impression of the sacred Stigmats: but with the superiour, the Mother of God alone, who only had the honour to beare, bring forth, nourish, & educat the only Sonne of the only Eternal God.

And in regard of this high and most eminent dignity of hers, al Creatures in heauen and earth reuerence her, and acknowledge her for their soueraigne Lady and Queene, and at her name the greatest Potentats on earth bow downe their knees, and do humble reuerence; so al generations of the world praise and honour her, as she in her Canticle diuinely

ly presaged: Behold from henceforth
all generatiōs shal call me blessed; & de
facto, what people, what nation is
there on the earth, so irreligious
and barbarous, who haue her not
in honour and reuerence? Euen
the Iewes, & their Rabbins haue
written in her praise, and the most
obstinat of them haue experien-
ced and acknowledged her most
powerful aide in their necessities.

As witnesseth this maruaylous
story recorded by the learned Pel-
bert in his Stellary of the B. Vir-
gin; of a Iewish-woman, who
being in the paines of childbirth,
& neerer going out of the world,
then bringing a child into it,
some Christians (who charitably
came to visit her) exhorted her
to inuocat the B. Virgin for her
deliuerance; the poore woman did
so

& serue the B. V. Mary. 257

so and lifting vp her eyes & voice
to heauen in a languishing man-
ner; O most gracious Virgin (said
she) I beseech you to haue pittie
on me though I be of the vnhap-
py race of those who so crucified
God your Sonne & consequently
vnworthy of your fauours) yet
notwithstanding if you shal vouch-
safe me your assistance in this
extremity; I do heere vow to re-
linquish the errour of my Reli-
gion, and together with the fruit
of my wombe (as soone as it shal
be borne to light) to receiue the
holy Baptisme, and liue and die
at your deuotion: she had no soo-
ner pronounced this, but sodainly
behold her safely deliuered of a
sonne, which according to her
vow within some few dayes (to-
gether with her self) she procured
to

to haue baptized; which her husband (who then had vndertaken a Iourney) vnderstanding at his returne, he was so mightily incensed at it, and in so furious a rage, as he presently in his mothers armes murthered the innocēt child; whereupon she out of feare of her owne death, and horreur of her childs, fled instantly crying al the way she went, in such a vehemencye, and in such affright, as the people flocking about her, & vnderstanding the reason of her laments, rann al towards her home so violently bent against the Murtherer, as infaillibly they had torne him in peeces had they encountred him; but he, (what with the horreur of his crime, and feare of punishment) preuented them, and fled towards the Citty gates

and serue the B.V. Mary. 259.

gates which finding shut, he was forced to take sanctuary in a litle Chappel of the B. Virgins then open by chance, where hauing leisure to looke about him, he espied an Image of our B. Lady in Relieue, ouer the highe Altar, at sight of which he was so stricken with shame and repentance, as casting him on his knees with a dolorous accent; Too great (sayd he) too great, O sacred Virgin, is your beingnity to me, who haue so greenuously offended you, to Protect and conceale me in this my flight; but I see it is true what I haue often hard, that your Clemency is the greatest maruayle in the world, and that but regard it, & it is vnmeasurable euery way: I implore then that sweet clemency of yours not to saue my life, for the horriblnes of my Crime, hath
aswel

aswel taken from me the desire, as the
deseruing of it, but to forget it, and
to forgiue and washe it away in the
fountaine of my teares, & withal to ac-
cept his deed of guift of mine to your
B. Sonne and you, of my hart and al
I am, who now haue no other desire,
then to be al, and wholly yours.

He had profecuted his speech,
but the Officers entering the Cha-
pel, interrupted him, and sea-
zing on him, they carried him
prisoner to the Prouost of the
place; where he was no sooner
come, but falling on his knees
before him, he sayd vnto him
with a resolut countenance; I do
not this to moue you to Compas-
sion of my crime, and saue my
life, but only to begg this fauour
of you, that I may haue the hap-
pines to be baptized before I dye.

The

and serue the B.V. Mary. 261

The Prouost no lesse reioycing then wondring at his demand, gladly granted him his request, and hauing receiued him from the Font himselfe, that Ceremony, being ouer, he proceeding to the examination of his fact, not letting the pleasure of the one, hinder the displeasure of the other. But behold, while this was in agitation, the mother powring forth her affection in laments ouer the murthered carcasse of her Child, by degrees perceiued it stirr, and fixe its eyes vpon her with a gracious smile, and being in a transport of ioy and admiration therof, at the same instant was brought her the newes of her husbands Conuersion; whereupon she instantly tooke her child, and presented it aliue
before

before the Prouost, no marke nor signe remayning that euer it had been dead, but only a litle starr where he had giuen the wound. The Prouost beholding this supendious miracle, absolued the Criminal as one who already was absolued from heauen; who being a learned man and a great Rabby in the Iewish law, afterwards wholly conuerted his tongue and penne to the setting forth the prayses of the B. Virgin and the Christian law, which he strögly defended against the errours of that sort.

Nay, euen the Turkes themselves, and impious Moores concurr in honouring the sacred Virgin; and reuerencing her as Mother of God, as appeares by the greuous penaltyes imposed by
their

& serue the B. V. Mary. 263

their Alcoran, on any whosoever
shal blaspheme her name. But
what should we say of the honour
exhibited to her amongst the
Christians, when scarcely is any
so poore a village or hamlett,
where she is not honoured; by
some place of deuotion dedicated
vnto her? and her Images and pi-
ctures are in such veneration, as
who hath not part in the worship
of them?

A yong Scholler (as Vincen-
tius in his historial Mirrors re-
counteth it) being so deuoted to
her, as he vsed on his knees, as
often as any Image of hers occu-
r'd, to salute her in this deuout
manner. *Haile Mary &c. or this:*
Blessed is the sacred Virgin; wombe
that bore the Eternal fathers sonne,
and blessed the breasts that gaue him
suck

sucke, &c. But as God oftentimes scourges those most, whom he loues dearest, it hapned this yong man fel into so violent a freinzie, as he would teare and bite his bookes and euery thing he could lay his hands vpon; One day amongst the rest being in his furious fitts, behod a yong man of incomparable beauty, and shining with resplendant light (no doubt but his good Angel) was seen by his beds side, making for him this pious prayer: O B. Lady, see, see your poore seruant heere, who so deuoutly and often hath prayed vnto you; and giuen a thousand testimonies of his deuotion; behold him now in how pitious a state he is, so destitut of all humane Comforts, as euen inhumanity it selfe would commiserat

and serue the B. V. Mary. 268

rat his case; this is the mouth,
these are the lippes that haue so
often pronounc't your praise; and
is it not pittie to see them now, the
instruments of rage & furye only,
which were once only of deuotiō
and piety? O therfore haue mercy
vpō him, who of none with more
right can expect it then of you, &
restor' him to that health he so wel
imploied in your honor hertofore;
This said, he dis-appeared, and the
yong man felt instantly the effect
of his prayers by his recouery, w-
hich was so speedy & miraculous,
as acknowledging the B. Virgins
particular fauour in it, he to grati-
fieber for it, entred into an austere
Religiō, where he liued & died as
became one, who held his life on
such a pious tenour of his good
Angel, and his better Aduocate.

M

How

*How we ought to reuerence
and adore the B Virgin,
in regard of the sublimity
of her glory above al other
Saints.*

CHAP. IV.



SE E I N G the Saints
which are now in
heauen, in possession
of their eternitie of
happines, are to be
honoured with that sort of reue-
rence which the Diuines cal *Du-
lia*, which is the lowest sort of re-
uerēce appropriated to any Saint,
& the higher they are in dignity,
with

and serue the B.V. Mary. 267

with the more high and particular reuerence are they to be honoured ; what supreme honour may we imagine due, vnto our soueraigne Lady and Queene of heauen, who by so many degrees of dignity is preferred before them al, seated at the right hand of her B. Sonne, so neere and deare vnto him as she is, and whom the rest of Saints, only a farr off reuerence and admire? And if it be true, that each ones glory beares a proportion with the grace they haue, & the more their grace on earth the more their glory in heauen; how excellent in glory must she bee aboue them al, who was so farr superiour to them in grace? for who knowes not, how from the very instant of her Conception,

M 2

when

when she was sanctified in her Mothers wombe, God went heaping more and more graces vpon her stil, vntil her death when the accumulation was Complete, and how in al tymes she cooperated with him in al her actions, in al occurēces, stil meditating how to add vnto it, accompanying al her exterior workes with the interior intention of the minde; Which Albert the great exemplifies very wel in that treatise of his, *de beata Virgine*; and S. Bernard more particularly where he sayes. This Virgin and mother of the highest, not only waking but euen sleeping had the fruition of heauenly things in Contemplation, no earthtlye affaire being so forcible, as to interrupt her Commerce of thought with heauen

and serue the B.V. Mary. 269
uen, in so much as euen in her
sleepe she was busyed more in
Contemplation then the rest of
the Saints when they were most
perfectly awake. Who then, of
what intelligent a spirit soeuer
they bee, can comprehend the
immensity of the grace and me-
rits of the glorious Virgin, &
consequently the infinit glorie
she had in recompence, seeing as
the same Doctours affirmer; *The*
more she excelled others in grace on
earth, the more glory she obtained
in heaven. Let vs conclude then,
that her glory there, is incompre-
hensible, and surpasses by infi-
nite degrees that of al the Saints
& Angels; Conformable to that
saing of S. Iohn Chrysostome:
What is there more holy than the B.
Virgin (says he;) neyther the Pro-

3 M phets

A Method to loue
 phets Apostles, Martyrs, Patriarches
 Angels, Trones, Dominations, Sera-
 phins, nor Churubins; in fine, there is
 no visible nor Created thing more
 great or more excellent then she.

And S. Anselme; Ineffable (says
 he) and euer-more admirable is the
 grace and greatnes of this Virgin:
 And in prosecuting his discourse:
 And what, O B. Lady: is there more
 to be sayd? when but Considering the
 immensity of your grace, glory; and
 felicity, I am destitute of forces; and
 my Voice fayleth me. And yet not
 only from the abundance of Grace
 which was in her, but much more
 from her humility may we argue
 the greatnes and dignity which
 she hath in heauen; for it being
 an approued verity to al the world
 that the more we abase our selues
 on earth, the more shal we be ex-
 alted

& serue the B. Mary. V. 271

alted for it in heauen; as is testified by verity it self: *Who humble themselves, shalbe exalted, &c.* And that great light of the Church S. Ambrose sayes: *The more abiect we are on earth, the more we shalbe exalted for it in heauen:* And he adds; *That by so many degrees of humility we descend on earth, by so many of glory we shal ascend in heauen.* Since no creature euer thought so humbly and abiectly of her selfe as this B. Virgin did, we may wel imagine, that by this pretious vertue she so wonn the hart of God, and gott such hold of his affections, that she euen obliged him by it to descend from heauen to earth into her wombe, and choose her for his spouse and mother, which she in that Canticle of hers Confesses of her selfe:

M. 4 *Because*

A Method to loue

Because he hath regarded the humility of his hand-maid, &c. Which shewes the excellency of her humility. And S. Bernard sayes of it, that when the Angel saluted her, her answering him in that manner so humble, and resigning her selfe entirely vnto the Wil of God: Behold the hand-maid of our Lord, &c. Was more grateful vnto God, and meritorious for her, then al the actions of men and Angels put together, and that by it alone, she merited, the being Mother of our Saviour Christ: Neuer! (sayes S. Bernard) had she been exalted aboue the Angels, if she had not humbled her selfe before.

And if some Saints, as namely S. Francis, haue merited by their humility, to be ranged amongst the Seraphins the cheifest Order
of

of Angels and next to the Diuinity; to what immensitie of glory are we to imagine the B. Virgin is exalted, for the profoundnes of her humility, which descended lower then euer any Saints could doe? In consideration of which, we may wel imagine, that her glorie and felicity as farr surpasseth that of al other Saints, as the heauē's do a litle point, the cleare light of the Sunne a candle the Ocean a smale drop of water, or al the earth the least graine of sand.

With good reason then, since she is exalted to such a height of dignitie, we are to honour her, as the soueraine Queene and Emperesse of men and Angels; and as eminent as she is in dignity so is she in beautye and amability, able to obscure with the brightnes

of its splendour, not only at humane eyes, but euen those of the Angels themselves, as appeares by this story recorded by Herod Religious of the Order of S. Dominick.

There was a yong scribe (sayes he) much deuoted to the B. Virgin, who being some-what conuersant in the holy Scriptures where her excellent beauty is commended with such Encomiums, he at last grew passionately desirous to see her in that beauty she appeared with in heauen, & praying for the accomplishment of his desires, he heard a voyce reprehending him for it, in that he ask't a thing aboue his capacity & which his eyes were too weake to behold, nor could it cost him lesse then his sight the beholding it;

& serue the B. V. Mary. 275

it; but he willing to put it to the venture, persisted stil in his Petition, yet at last vpon more mature reflexion, he resolu'd, if the fauour were granted him, to reserue on eye at least whilest only with the other he regarded it; And so it happened that she appearing vnto him in a most glorious and resplendent manner, that one eye with which he regarded her, being ouercome with the excellency of the obiect, became wholly blind; but so farr was he from euer repenting it, as with iterated petition he besought her, to appeare but vnto him in that glory once agayne, and he would be also willing to forgoe the other eye; the B. Virgin to content his deuotion, did as he desired her, but was so farr from inflicting that

that penalty vpon him which he did expect, as she restored him his other eye againe, wher with we may imagine how contented a man he was.

Neither doth she exceed al the Angels and Saints in beauty and splendour only, but also in ioy and felicity, which with out doubt she hath in as supereminent degree aboue the rest, as her glory aboue the rest is more high and eminent; And for that there are diuers Doctours who affirme, that she alone hath more glory then al the Saints together; this being so, imagine of what ioy & felicity she is posselt the while, the quality of which is so exceedingly rauishing, that S. Augustine doubts not to affirme of it, that one dropp of heavenly felicity

and serue the B.V. Mary. 277

city but falling into hel, would sweeten al its torments. O strange expression of the wondrous sweetness and deliciousnes thereof: if one dropp of it could worke such effects in hel, what must whole torrents of it worke in the harts of those who are posselt of it? The Apostles vpon an arid and barren mountains topp, sawe but only a litle glimpse of the glory of heauen in our Sauours Transfiguration, and tasted by it but a litle superficial ioy, and yet you see they could haue been content to haue remained there al their liues. But that example which I shal now declare, deserues yet greater admiration.

A certaine Religious Monke of holy life, exercised long in the contemplation of the Loyes of Heauen, conceiued at last such

a feruent desire of it, that he incessantly besought Alm. God, that (to comprehend it the better) if it were possible he might haue some taste of it in this mortal life; and continuing in this deuotion many yeares, at last close by his Cell he heard a bird sing so wondrous delightfully, as rauished with it, he presently lyed him out to enioy more freely its delicious melody, and following it a flight or two, at last it ledd him into a wood thereby; where it begann to sing; and he rauish't in hearing it, satt downe nighe the tree wheron it was, where he might both see & heare it best, nor did he know, with whether he was delighted most; who when he beheld the beauty of it, wished himself al

eyes

and serue the B.V. Mary. 279

eyes, when he heard its diuine notes wished himselfe all eares againe; In fine, feasting these two senses so long he satt till the Bird cea't its melody, and flew quite away; when he arising tooke his way towards his Monastery, imagining he had been away only some houre or two; but being returned back againe, he found it almost all rebuilded a new againe, and knocking at the gate, the Porter and he were both so strange one to another, as they admired at either, the Porter that the Monke should say he was Religious of the house, the Monke that he should say he had been Porter there many yeares; In fine, the Abbot came being informed thereof, whom he as little knew as the Porter, and vnto whom he was as little

little knowne; who in fine examining him, found by the Records of the House that those Religious whom he named, to haue liued in that Monastery with him, were deceased so long before, as by computation of time they found, he had been absent three hundred and sixty yeares. If then so many yeares seemed but a short houre to that Religious man charmed with the sweetnes of that Musick he listned vnto, perform'd perhaps by some Angel of heauen; how delicious, sweet, and rauishing must the Ioyes of Heauen needs bee, where al the Angels sing together incessantly praising and glorifying their heauenly King.

And if this good Religious man could remaine expos'd vnto
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 281

the iniuries of the time so many
yeares, rauished with tasting but
one dropp as it were of the deli-
ciousnes of heauen; O God, who
can imagine the delight of those,
who in al comfortable Eternity
shal bee feasted with it to al sa-
tiety; *They shal bee inebriated with
the abundance of thy house, and drink
of the torrent of thy delights*; sayes
the holy Scripture. Seeing then
the B. Virgin, next to God is
Mistresse and Lady of this Pallace
of deliciousnes, and as it were the
pipe that coueyes al its delicious-
nes from God the fountaine of it,
to al that participat of its Ioy in
heauen: Let vs honour, adore,
and reuerence her with al those
due acknowledgments, of which
we haue already treated or shal
herafter treate,

That

*That we ought to adore the
B Virgin, for that she is
the soueraine Lady of all
Creatures both in earth,
and heauen.*

CHAP. V.



A PERSON which
is riche, noble, and
vertuous, deserveth
honour, & the more
they excel in it, the
more honour they deserue; as we
see by experience in persons most
eminent in the world. The Bles-
sed Virgin then, being so great a
paterne of sanctity, a Compen-
dium

and serue the B.V. Mary. 283

dium of al perfections, chosen by God for his Mother, and elected to a supreme height of dignity aboue al the Quiers of Angels, and finally being Empresse of al superiour and inferiour Creatures; with good reason both Angels and men are to honour and reuerence her, as the soueraigne Queene of the whole Vniuerse: neither should there be any (me thinks) so impudent to dispute her title to it, nor so impious as to offer to defraude her of those sublime honours due to so sublime a title; she were a Queene, if there were no other reason but only because her sonne is a King, King of Kings, & Lord of Lords; and who knowes not that the King and Queenes honours goes so conioyn'd in one,
as

as from the dishonouring the one, redounds to the other a dishonour too? The B. Virgin, being (as formerly we haue said) daughter to God the Father, Mother of his Sonne, and Spouse of the holy Ghost, and consequently daughter, mother, and spouse of the holy Trinity, considering her alliance and coniunction with God, and namely with the humanized Word of God the Sone, whom this great Al acknowledges for King; of her being Queen can be no doubt al; and this S. Athanasius affirms where he sayes: *He being King and Lord, his mother who engendred him, hath consequently the reputation of Queene and Mother.* And S. Iohn Damascen: *She was undoubtedly declared Queene (sayes he) of al Created things when she*

& serue the B. V. Mary. 285

she became Mother of the Creatour.

Let vs then conclude, that she being *Queene* of this *Vniuerse*, hath ouer it an absolut command, and that al are to obey her, and render her that honour and obeisance, which from *Vassals* is due to those who are ouer them; And in admiration of this power of hers, was that deuout exclamation of holy *S. Bernard*; *O blessed Mary* (sayes he) *al power is giuen you both in heauen and earth, do as you can do al that you desire.*

Among al the titles of *Greatnes*, which our Mother the holy Church honours her with, that of *Queene of heauen* she vses most frequently, & *Lady of Angels*: *Regina celi*, & *Domina Angelorum*, &c. Now the greater the extent of ones *Dominion* is, the greater
euer

uer is their power and magnificence; so as if one could attaine to the Dominion ouer al the world; how absolute and vnlimited should their power to be? and yet what is al this world to the Heauens amplitude which she is Lady of? and where her subiects are perpetually honoring her, so as we may say of her: *The Heauens declare the glory of Mary*; and the heauenly Courtyers take it for honour to obey her commands. To conclude, it is but litle we can say of her greatnes, how great soeuer that litle may seeme to be, and arriuing euen to admiration, which euer there takes vp, where humane knowledge leaues.

And so is it not an admirable thing, that the whole roundour of the earth in comparifon of the
Heauens

and serue the B. V. Mary. 287

Heauens should be but as the center point compared to a mightie Spheare? & who can imagine then the immensity of that, when the earth which containes Empires, Kingdomes and Prouinces, is so meere a nothing in comparison thereof? Some are of opinion, that the element of water is ten times bigger then the land, the aire ten times bigger then the water, the fire then that, and so with proportion each heauen bigger then another, &c. And to giue you some dimme light of its magnitud, the Moone which in lesse then a moneth surrounds its Orbe, would be incircling the starry heauen according to the most expert of the Mathematiciens thirty fixe thousand yeares and more; which notwithstanding

ding compared to the *Cælum empyreum* or habitation of the Blessed, is but a poore litle Circle, & for magnitud not worthy the speaking of. For which reason some Authours are of opinion cited by Philip Diez, that if a milstone were throwne from thence, it would be a thousand five hundred yeares in falling down. Who admires not in hearing this, and cries not out with him : O Lord, *I haue considered your workes, and remaine astonished and out of my self with wonder.*

One of the ancient Prophets in consideration of the greatnes of this glorious Pallace of Alm. God exclaime : O Israel, how great is the house of God, how mighty great is the place of his possession ? he is great and hath no limits, he is high
and

& serue the B. V. Mary. 289

and cannot be measured. And we may wel imagine it to bee great, since euery Saint shal haue a habitation a part, and a place proportioned vnto its merits. And this we haue from our Sauour Christ himselfe in comforting his afflicted Disciples for his departure, where he sayes: Let not your harts be troubled for in my fathers house aye many mansions. And S. Vincent of S. Dominiks Order, speaking of these Mansions, sayes that each of the Blessed in heauen shal haue assigned them for their habitation a larger circuit them is betwixt the east and west. Now there being incomparably more Saints in heauen, then there be men on earth, I leaue it to you to imagine how infinit great the heauenly Kingdome is.

N

Now

Now the B. Virgin being Queen of this so immense dominion, hath al the Blessed there consequently for her subiects & Courtiers, who being in due Order rankt about her Throne, alwayes make tender vnto her of their seruices and obsequiousnes, and if (as S. Iohn Chrysostome sayes) while she was yet on earth she was attended vpon by such an infinity of Angels to defend her against al the assaults of hel, and conserue vnto their king this faire tabernacle of his, Inuiolat; how much more gloriously attended is she now in heauen, where she sits crown'd in possession of so high a dignitie? It is impossible to imagine the number that waytes vpon her there; which the Prophet endeavouring to speake of
sayes

and serue the B.V. Mary. 291
sayes. Ten thousand serue thee, and a
hundred times ten thousand assist be-
fore thee: setting downe a finit
number for an infinit. And S.
Denys sayes, that the number of
Angels by many parts exceeds the
number of al Corporal and ma-
terial things. And for those, we
know, how the sublunary bodies
yeild in greatnes to the celestial
bodies, and they vnto the to-
ther, the more high they are; in so
much as not a starr of the least
magnitud, but is farr greater then
al the globe of inferior things to-
gether. We know besides, that
euery man from Adam to the
Consummation of the world
hath had and shal haue an Angel
Guardian to attend vpon them, be
they good or bad, al equally par-
ticipating of this benefit; whence

it followes, (as we haue sayd before) that the number of Inferiour Angels deputed to that charge, exceedeth the number of al men that euer were, are, and shal bee; which being so, how innumeros must the superiour bee, since (as we haue formerly deduced) they increase in proportion the more superiour they are. Certainly, more easy it were, to number al the starrs in heauen, the drops of the Sea, the leaues of trees, the plants of the earth, and the Atomes of the Sun, then the multitud of Angels knowne only to God himselfe.

Let vs add moreouer, the better to sett of the glory of our soueraigne Queene, a second wonder in traine of this; to wit; That al the Angels, as infinit as they are, haue

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haue each one yet a diuersity among themselves; and if it be such a delightful sight, to see a Garden all planted with variety of flowers, how much more delightful must it bee, to see these Angelical flowers adorning the heavenly Garden with each one their seueral species according to their seueral dignity and merits? And heere our Imagination hath a spacious feild, to exercise it selfe in deuout conceits of the B. Virgins perfections and excellence; for if the Courtiers stroue with so much splendour, how much more splendid must needs that Maiestie bee, on whom they all attend.

For so these B. Spirits are perpetually attending before her Throne adoring her, and ready at

N 3 the

the least twinkling of her eye, to execut her commands, which are commonly for the good and saluation of man. This is the opinion of S. Augustine where he sayes: *S. Michael and al the other Angels haue an eye in heauen vnto the B. Virgin, to see where shee would Command them any things for the good of foules on earth.* Let vs conclude then; that her Greatnesse is vnspakeable and incomprehensible not only by men but euen by the Angels themselues, and that next to God she hath the most soueraigne command in heauen, as being Queene of al the celestial Hierarchies there, and Mother of the supreme Monarck and Creator of euery thing.

Neither doth her dominion terminate or end heere, but as
she

and serue the B.V. Mary. 295
she is Queene of Angels, and of
Heauen, so also is she of Earth &
the Inhabitants thereof; and for
this reason the Diuines cal her fre-
quently *Regina mundi*, the Queen
of earth. S. Gregory often intit-
les her to the name of *Lady of al*
Christians; & so with good reason
may she bee, who was so great a
part of our redemption, for God
had neuer been made man but for
her, and consequently had neuer
suffered for vs, nor gone through
with the worke of our redenip-
tion; which ought to be a power-
ful Motiue to induce vs to honour
and reuerence her.

Nay, euen the very diuels them-
selues do dread her power at the
sole inuocation of whose name
they al are put to flight; *When I*
pronounce but Aue Maria (sayes the
N 4 deuout

deuout S. Bernard) the *Heauens* do smile, the *Angels* reioyce, the world exults, hel trembles, and the diuels are in dismay. S. Bridgitt in the first booke of her Reuelations sayes, that the B. Virgins rankes and dignity in heauen is so supreme, as the diuels are constrained to honour it; and she addes : That as often as any shalbe molested by their temptations, let them but inuocat her sacred name, and presently they al shal vanish and be put to flight, of whose sole Command they more stand in awe, then of al their torments; so as whensoever she vndertakes the cause of any soule, they dare not withstand her in it; as witnesseth this story registred in the *Promptuary* of her Miracles, and taken out from thence by *Pelbert* in

and serue the B.V. Mary. 297
in his Stellary of the B. Virgin.

There was a man (sayes he) of a nature so euil inclined and peruerse, as he neuer was exercised in any good, but only in some few reuerences and praiers which he daily offered vp to the B. Virgin. This man, though often inspired to leaue his wicked life, was yet so farr from it, as he persisted more obstinat in it euery day, vntil at last in drawing his latest breath, he imagined himself hurried by a crew of diuels, with horrible noyse and howlings vnto the tribunal of the Iudge; where they demaunding iustice, and the Iudge putting them to declaration of the cause, they clearly proued him a most wicked man, and as such desired sentence should be giuen on him; When

N v the

the B. Virgin standing vp in his defence, declared whatsoeuer good she had knowne by him, like a most faithful Aduocate; but scarce had she finished her speech, when in an insolent manner the diuels argued against her thus; is this al you are able to say for him? vnlesse you defend his cause better then so and bring more proofes of goodnes in him, what, for his bad, wil become of him may be easily seen; & heere he began to add vnto the list of his offences thousands and thousands more, when the B. Virgin seeing their number so great, as by the way of Iustice there was no hope for him, shee strait addrest her selfe by that of mercy, and prostrating her selfe before the Iudges feete, no sooner he had raysed

and serveth the B. V. Mary. 299

raised her vp, but she began: if these pretenders to Iustice (sayd shee) were interessed in the cause more then out of malice, they should carry it and I would not so much as dispute it with them, but to what end al this long recapitulation of crimes what concerns it them whether your inspirations were obeyed or no? or since when haue they been soe iealous of your honour, that they should care so much where you were dishonored? certainly, if there be any fault, it is cheifly theirs, and if there be any offence it is only yours; it is you only whom he hath offended, and to you alone he is ready to make satisfaction, not with any boast of merit, or that he stands on iustifying his cause, but with repen-
tance

tance in his heart, teares in his eyes, & sighs in his mouth, to obtaine of your mercy, what of iustice he cannot hope for. I cōfesse the quantity & quality of his crimes are so enormous great, that they deserue nothing but death & dānation; but if my prayers were euer powerful with you now hear my prayers for him, and by these breasts which had the honour once to giue you sucke, I coniure you; for so many drops of milke you haue receiued from them; to bestow one drop of bloud of the aboundance you haue shed for sinners, to washe this man from his sinnes; for his life hereafter I wil vndertake, so as you wil pardon what is past; for I see al signes of a repentant sinner in his heart, his eyes, and al; and concluding heere with a profound re-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 301

uerence, the Iudge remained a while with his eyes fixt vpon the ground in great suspence, now weighing the mightines of his crimes, now of her power that interceded for him, whilst either part was wauering betwixt hope and feare; at last lifting vp his eyes, & casting them on her with a gracious regard: Though it be exceeding much you aske, said he, yet were it much more I could not deny it such an intercession; for your sake then I pardon him this once, but neuer let him hope for pardon againe, if he abuse it now; hauing sayd this, the diuels confounded departed with horrible cryes saying; We knew wel enough what would be the end of it, shee euer hath the better of vs, and 'tis our folly to contend
with


with her, she is too powerful an Advocate, and too gracious with the Iudge: so they vanished away, and the poore man returning to himself againe, recounted to al this horrible vision, and deceiuing the Phisicians for his corporal health, and the diuels for his spiritual, he recouered both, making of either such vse for the time to come, that he entred into Religion, and there to his dying day ledd a most holy life.

By which we may see the preciousnes of the sacred bloud of Christ our Lord, and how preuaient with him and powerful ouer our aduersaries is his Glorious Mother and our most faithful Advocate.

of

Of the great honour we owe
to the B. Virgin for her
being our most deare and
merciful Mother.

C H A P. VI.

HE Blessed Virgin
standing at the foote
of the Crosse on
Mount Caluary ac-
companied with S.
Iohn; Our Sauour Christ behol-
ding her with a pittiful and gra-
cious eye, sayed vnto her; Woman,
behold thy sonne; meaning S. Iohn,
and then addressing his speech to
him he sayd; *Behold thy Mother*; &
from

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from that time (sayes the holy Scripture) he made account of her as his owne, and to the end of his life obserued her accordingly..

From hence the learned gather this great mystery; how our Sauour in recommending her vnto S. Iohn for his Mother commended al the faithful vnto her for her children; for if S. Iohn (say they) represented them al (as there is no doubt of it) the B. Virgin being assigned him for Mother, was likewise assigned vnto al Christians. Whereupon S. Bernard fals into this deuout exclamation: O worthy of al admiration! behold thy Mother, &c. for know thou, if Mary be thy Mother, Iesus Christ is thy brother, & his Father: consequently thine then embrace

& serue the B. V. Mary. 305

embrace thy happines in her ; And so assuredly it is, God is our Father ; Our Father which art in heauen : We are brothers to our Sauour Christ : Goe vnto my brothers, &c. sayes he to the holy Magdalen, and for the B. Virgins being our Mother, there can be no doubt at al ; and heare S. Anselme proving it ; *Iesus Christ the sonne of Mary, is our brother, (sayes he) & therefore consequently his Mother must be ours.* How much then ought we to reioyce, and how excessiue great our contentment ought to be, hauing for our Mother the Mother of God himselfe, Queen both of heauen and earth.

And not only she is our Mother, but a most benigne and gracious Mother, fauouring of nothing but mercy and sweetnes, & exer-

exercising nothing but the works of piety and pittie towards vs. So as her most ordinary title is *the Mother of grace and mercy: Maria mater gratiae, mater misericordiae*, and so in that other Antiphon she is called *Mater misericordiae*, &c. where we, who lye sighing and weeping in this miserable vale of teares, implore her aide and gentle pittie of our calamities. And wherefore is it, that in euery publick place her Image occur vnto our eyes holding her sacred Infant in her armes, but only to signify she is alwayes in actual Tendring of him vnto vs for our good, as if she would saye, heer take my sonne and the sonne of the Eternal Father who for your sakes descended from heauen to earth, and putt on the vestment
of

& serue the B. V. Mary. 367

of humanity in which he suffered
so many indignities euen at last to
vndergoe an ignominious death,
feare not but approach vnto him
heer with confidence, he is al gra-
tious, al pittiful, and affable, and
if your sinnes deterr you from
comming neare, remember how
to make you great, he is become
a litle infant, and their angers
are euer easily appeas'd; on my
word take him then, and enioy
him as a giift frō me, whose pos-
session can not but much aduan-
tage you; and to render your selfe
more worthy of the interest in
him, wholly renounce al interest
in vice, and casting your selfe
humbly at his feete, resigne vnto
him your hart, and your best be-
loued desires, and in recompence
thereof he wil bestow on you a
lasting

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lasting good and happines aboue
the iniury of death or time. O
happy, and a thousand times hap-
py are those soules who harken to
these silent invitations of hers,
and hauing recourse vnto her in
all their afflictions know how to
prevayle themselves of her beni-
gnity; let them assure themsel-
ues they shal neuer finde the ga-
tes of her liberality shutt, nor sitt
downe with a repulse of what soe-
uer they law fully desire. *God for-
bit* (sayes deuout S. Bernard)
*that I should thinke you can euer
abandon those, who haue placed theyr
Confidence in you.* And Theophilus
in the Booke intituled, *The mirrour
of the B. Virgin*, is introduced
saying: *I know, O soueraine Lady
your Care of vs how excessiue great it
is; for who euer hath hoped in you and
been*

and serue the B.V. Mary. 309

*been confounded ; who euer implored
your aide , and been abandoned ? And
to this purpose is that saying of
Origen : I hould for certainly true,
that the B. Virgin being instantly be-
seeched for any thing , is neuer wan-
ting to the necessities of him who
beseeches her , for that she is al mercy ,
and so ful of grace , and therefore she
cannot choose but haue Compassion of
those who craue her helpe. Excellent
words , and able to animat the
most desperat to a hope of his
saluation , and allay the most ou-
trageous affliction which was euer
in any breast. Being our Mother
then , she cherished vs with a ma-
ternal loue , and hath more care
of vs then euer any Mother had of
her only child , neuer fayling vs
with succour in our necessities , as-
sistance in our dangers , comfort
in*

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in our afflictions, nor finally deliurance from any euil what soeuer, when soeuer with confidence and deuotion we importune her for it. So is she our aduocate in heauen with Alm. God, where she gladly vndertakes our protection, defends our cause, procures to assure vs the possession of Eternal blisse, and finally neglects no occasion of putting vs faire with her B. Sonne, and working vs into his grace. In consideration of the great prerogatiue we haue in heauen by such an Agent for vs, S. Bernard encourages man to present himselfe without feare before Alm. God: *Go, Go, with Confidence, saies he, before the throne of his diuine Maiestie where the sonne beholds the Mother; and the father the sonne; the sonne shews his father his hands*

& serue the B. V. Mary. 311

*hands and feete and side al wounded:
the mother vnto her sonne her sacred
breasts that gaue him suck, so as there
is no feare of a repulse where so many
signes of loue and charity are.*

But yet this is not al, nor doth
this careful Lady and Mother of
ours only procure vs fauours, but
she assures them vs by appeasing
her Sonne when we haue offen-
ded him, and reconciling his loue
vnto vs againe; but for her, how
often had the world been thun-
dred by that iust Iudge aboue?
how often had the foules therein,
for their offences, been precipita-
ted and cast downe head long into
Eternal hel? Of which a more
cleare example cannot bee, then
that memorable visiō of S. Domi-
nick, who praying one night, be-
hold in vision our Sauour Christ
seated

seated at the right hād of his Alm. Father, al inflamed with wrath & furie, holding three terrible thunderbolts in his hand, ready to discharge on earth in punishment of three sinnes then frequently raining amongst men, Pride Auarice, and Luxury; when the Blessed Virgin to mitigate his wrath prostrating her selfe before his feete, and straitly embracing them; I appeale, I appeale (sayd she) from this your anger how euer iust it bee, vnto that wonted clemency of yours, beseeching you by it, if not absolutely to reuoke your sentence, yet at least to surcease for a while the execution of it; for, alas, what wil you do? against whom do you prepare these armes? and whose ruine haue you resolved vpon?

wil

and serue the B.V. Mary. 313

wil you annihilate your owne
workmanship, and bee the per-
dition of those whom you haue
saued with so much cost of paine
and bloud? and would you) re-
plied her sonne, hauing rayf'd her
vp, & seated her by his side) would
you haue such crimes as these vn-
punished? who would not then in
hope of impunity committ them
hereafter in despight of me? no,
it were but to prostitute my Iu-
stice to their abuse not to exercise
it heere; and now to pardon them
were to make my pardon for euer
more vile and contemptible?
why alas deare sonne (sayd she)
as they are apt to offend, so ar
they to be sorry for it, doubt not
then but at your first summons of
them to repentance, they wil be
obedient to it; and to this effect
O behold

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behold heere ready two seruants of yours (pointing out to S. Frācis and S. Dominick) apt ministers to employ therein , and to exhort them vnto penance, after which if they persist in their wickednes , do your iustice what it wil with them , I haue done with them. Hereupon his diuine Maiestie let his thunder fal out of his hands , his boyling anger coole, and at his Mothers prayers was for that once content to pardon man.

Hauing then a Mother in heauen so powerful as she, let vs haue recourse to her, and put vs in shelter vnder her, as children do vnder their Mothers when they fly their Fathers wrath; and that especially when wee finde our selues most preſt with ill fortune or calamity,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 315

ty, and say vnto her : *Sub tuum
præsidium, &c.* O mother of God and
of vs, wee put our selues vnder your
paotection, refuse vs not in our neces-
sities, nor abandon vs vnto the af-
flictions that threaten vs; and haue
a firme confidence that she wil
succour you, and haue pittie of
your miserable estate, who neuer
refuses those who haue recourse
to her. In so much as a holy Doc-
tour sayes; If so great be the enor-
mity of our crimes as we feare to
appeare with them before Alm.
God, our best course were to ad-
dresse our selues to her, and she
infallibly wil succour vs. And S.
Chrysostom in one of his Ser-
mons sayes vnto her; You haue
been chosen from eternity (sayes
he) Mother of God, to the end
that those whom God in iustice

O 2 cannot

cannot saue, should arriue by your pittiful intercession vnto saluation.

And with this accords wel that Vision which B. Leo had, one of holy S. Francis companions, in which he had a representation of the finall Iudgement day, where he sawe two ladders reared vpp, the one a read one reaching from earth to heauen, where our B. Sauiour al in terror sate; the other of white, iust of the same proportion extended to the B. Virgins throne, where she sate in al sweetness and affability; and he obserued that those who mounted vp by that read one, did fal to ground agayne some from the neather rounds and so vppwards euen vnto the very topp, vntil Saint Francis called to them, and admonished them

and serue the B.V. Mary. 317

them to clime by that white one,
and he would assure them of bet-
ter speed; and he sawe that those
who followed his counsel were
gratiously receiued by our Lady
& introduced into heauen. From
which vision, and we haue before
deduced, results an euident prooffe
of her motherly Care of vs, and
how she loues vs euer to passion
procuring with extraordinary so-
licitud al wee stand in need of
both in heauen and earth. With
good reason then ought we to re-
uerence her, and haue her in ho-
nour and veneration; with good
reason are we to serue her affe-
ctionately, and consecrat vnto
her the best desires of our hart;
and this al lawes both diuine and
humane exact of vs, to witt, that
if she be our mother, we should

O ; loue

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loue and honour her; and if a loue and honour be due from vs to our parents who engender vs into this world, with how much more reason is it due to her, who so carefully procures our regeneration to a better life?

Let vs not cease then to loue & reuerence this soueraigne Lady both of heauen and earth since God himselfe doth it as wel as we, and (according to *Methodius*) hath a kind of obligation also to doe it, she being his Mother, and consequently the precept of honouring our parents hauing also reference vnto him, yea and it seemes in more particular manner vnto him then vs, since she was more particularly his parent then any can be ours, both because he had no other on earth
but

& serue the B. V. Mary. § 19

but her, as also because she could haue no other sonne. You haue good reason to reioice (sayes the sayd *Methodius*) since you haue him in a manner on the score with you, to whom al mortals are indebted else. And so he went still honouring her heer on earth, as his deare Mother, and as such was obedient to her; *et erat subditus illis*, as the holy Scripture sayes; neither doth he lesse honour her now in heauen, but (as some deuout Doctors sayd) after his glorious resurrection first saluting her with a *Salve sancta Parens*; he iterated it at her Assumption into heauen, and there seating her at his owne right hand, al the Court of heauen doing reuerence to her the while, he constituted her in absolut power and
O 4 authority

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authority ouer the trine Empire
of the Vniuerse ; where al bow
down before her, as to the daugh-
ter, mother and spouse of the Al-
blessed Trinity, the Queene of
Angels, Empresse of the World,
and most faithful Mediatrix of al
Christian soules vnto her Blessed
Sonne , who grants al things at
her request.



How

How to put these reuerences in practise, Wherby the B. Virgin is to be honored.

C H A P. VII.



IN the precedent chapters we haue seen of what excellency and valour is the exercise of Reuerences to the B. Virgin, and how acceptable vnto her it is, we haue moreouer sufficiently informed our selues of the reasons which should moue vs vnto her reuerence, as that she is the mother of the king of heauen, her surpassing glory there, and that she is of
O v higher

higher dignity then al the quiers of heauen, that she hath al power heer on death, and finally that she is our Mother and soueraigne Lady also. And yet much more could alleage I alleage to moue vs to deuotion, did not the feare deterr me of ingulping my self into so wide and profound an Ocean. Wherefore now it remaines that I treat of the Method we are to vse, to put in practise this so laudable deuotion.

First then I say, we are to endeavour by often genuflexions and inclinations of the body to honour her; in which the better to actuat our selues we are to banish from vs al tepidity and drowzynes; and make choice of time and place most conuenient for it: and first, touching the circumstance

stance of place, priuaty is the cheifest thing we are to regard; of time, the night seemes fittest as that, which is freest from distraction, & best composeth the mind.

We reade in *Surius*, how S. Elizabeth daughter of the King of Hungary exercised herselfe with such affections in this so laudable deuotion, as she appointed one of her women euery night to awake her at a certaine houre by some secret way she had, when she would rise vnknowne to the Prince her husband, and spend most part of the insuing night in these adorations which the Roman Breuiary makes mention of; *Shee rising in the nights (says it) from her husband, and the time in prayer and genuflections. At which time, no doubt, but the Angels reioy-*

reioyced to see her vertuously im-
ployed, being riche and noble by
birth, but far more by vertue and
her true deuotion, and finally her
performing that on earth, which
the Angels account themselves
happy to do in heauen.

Now for the number of them,
I wil prescribe none, but leaue it
to the deuotions of those who are
desirous to exercise themselves
therin, nor the manner how it is
to be done, either of bowing one
knee to the ground, or both, of
lifting vp their hands or crossing
them before their breasts, but let
them choose that posture which
likes them best, and which makes
most for their deuotion.

Only I wil speake a word or
two in the commendations there-
of in general, as first, of the fa-
cility

and serue the B.V. Mary. 325

cility wherewith it is don, there being none so much employed or infirme, who cannot with ease do somewhat in this kind, either in bending the knee, or bowing the head, actions which are compatible with al, in what estate or imployment soe'r they be. Then it is a kind of deuotion (this of adoration) of al others the most noble and acceptable to the Queene of Heauen, the office of Angels, and who then would not be ambitious of it? to doe the same on earth, which al the celestial Courtiers do in heauen? and I beseech deuout persons, that they would but consider, how diligently and with what care your earthly Princes are serued and honoured by their followers and Courtyers; which whosoever shal
but

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but obserue, must needs blush for shame, if they be not as careful and assiduous in seruing their Queene of Heauen.

And to incite our deuotions thereunto, it would do wel to read of the diligence of Saints in this particular; as namely in Surius of *S. Albert*, how he bowed his knees a hundred times a day, and fifty times prostrated himself on the ground, saying each time an *Aue Maria* in honour of the Queene of Heauen; And of *S. Catherine* of Sucina daughter of *S. Brigit*, how (according to the same Authour) she was from her tender infancy so exercised in prayer, as besides our Ladye Office which she recited euery day, with the Penitential Psalmes & other such deuotions, she imploy'd
her

and serue the B. V. Mary. 327
her selfe fower houres euery day
continually in this exercise of
genuflexions vnto the B. Virgins
honour, accompanying it with
many teares. As for that which
S. Iohn Damascen hath left writ-
ten of *Simon Stilites*, it doth more
cause our wōder then imitation;
his standing on a pillar, exposed
vnto the rigors of winters and
scorching of sōmers heate; thirty
fixe cubits highe, situated on an
eminent Mountaines topp; and
this continued for more then
thirty yeares, making a thousand
and a thousand genuflexions and
inclinations euery day; and one
of the seruants of B. Theodoret
Bishopp of Cyrene obseruing
him one day, counted aboue a
thousand two hundred and forty
inclinations of his, and that of
those

those more painful ones, he bowing (as it were) euen round in performing them.

So of the glorious Apostle S. Bartholomew we reade; that, a hundred times a day and as many by night, he vsed to bend his knees, which was more in one who was so perpetually and assidually employed in preaching and conuerting of the world, then a hundred times so much were in another man. Wel did he vnderstand of how highe price and value with the B. Virgin these Reuerences and adorations were,) vnderstanding things in such an illuminatiue manner as he did) or els he had neuer been so careful & punctual in performing them.

But no wonder that the holy Saints and freinds of Alm. God
haue

& serue the B. V. Mary. 329

haue produced such strāge effects
as these, & left to vs so litle hope
of imitating them, since the di-
uine grace that superabounded in
them, the ardent fire of the holy
Ghost that incessantly inflamed
their harts, and that height of
perfection they had attained vnto
al concurred vnto the rendring
them actiue vigours and dili-
gent in this holie exercise. But
as for vs weaklings as we are,
destitut of those spiritual forces
which they had, and that mind to
apply those forces to the best; if
we cannot imitat them so nearly,
yet at least a farr off we may do
somewhat in their imitation; and
bitter is it so to do, & do it deuout-
ly, then weary our selues by en-
terprizing too much, and so be-
come wholly dulled and dis-ani-
mat,

mat, and rather loose spirit then gayne by the excesse.

There is an Example concerning this, taken out of the Mirror of examples which is this. A certaine Religious woman had a daily deuotion to say an hundred and fifty *Aue Maries*, accompanying each one with a profound reuerence; but she growing cold in the performance of them, by reason the number seemed excessive great, was diuinely admonished in vision to diminish them to a third part, vnder the condition that she should say those with greater feruour & deuotion. And S. *Hierome* to this purpose sayes, it is farr better to say one Psalm deuoutly and with alacrity of spirit, then the whole Psalter with negligence and tepidity

and serue the B.V. Mary. 331

dity. Notwithstanding, supposing
al be equal, certainly much bet-
ter it is, to do more then lesse, in
these or any other exercises of
piety, since good workes ar the
more meritorious stil with the
more difficulty, they ar perform'd
and the more grateful is the doing
of it, to those vnto whose reue-
rences it is exhibited.



How

*How the aptest time for the
exercise of these deuotions,
is the particular feasts of
our B^y Lady.*

C H A P. VIII.



THE Church euer
guided by the holy
Ghost, hath in al ty-
mes erected Tēples,
and consecrated Al-
tars, in reuerence of the sacred
Queene of Heauen, and hath ho-
noured her with vowes, Hym-
nes, Canticles, and Laudes, and
diuers other deuotions and serui-
ces, which the feare of detayning
the

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the Reader too long, makes me
forbeare the relation of; but a-
boue the rest, some feasts it hath
commaunded to be kept, wheron
she is more particularly honou-
red.

Those may be diuided into two
Classes, the greater & the lesser,
the greater include her Concep-
tion, Natiuity, Purification, An-
nunciation, and her Assumption
into heauen: The lesser (& which
are not of precept) her Præsenta-
tion, Visitation, & others; among
which we may add the Saturday.
To begin then from the lowest,
the Saturday is dedicated by the
holy Church vnto her honour, &
namely in the Councel of Trent,
where it is ordained, that Masses,
and Offices, should be sayd of
her, on those dayes, when they
concurr

concurr not with any other feast. Moreouer it hath been an antient custome of deuout Christians, to fast that day in her honour; which kind of deuotion is most acceptable vnto her, as appeares by this following story.

S. Anselme writes of a certaine Theefe, who entring once into a poore widowes house, with intent to despoile her of what she had, and finding her so slenderly furnished as he imagined it not worth his paines, he to decline the suspition of what he came for, ask't her what victuals she had, & whither she had broke her fast that day? God, forbid, replied she, that I should violat so my vow I haue made to the B. Virgin, of fasting in her honor euery saturday: why so? sayd the theefe: because

& serue the B. V. Mary. 335

cause, (sayd she agayne,) I haue heard a certaine learned preacher say that whosoever did it, should neuer die without Confession: The theefe was so stricken at the report of this, as remayning a long time in consideration of his wicked life, at last he started out of that melancholy posture wherein he was, and setting one knee to the ground, and lifting his hands and eyes to heauen: Seeing, it is so, O B. Vigin, (sayd he,) and that each poore thing that is don for you is so richly rewarded. I heere promise and vow in imitation of this deuout seruant of yours, every saturday to fast in your honour, as long as it shal please Alm. God to gine me life and health; which afterwards he inuiolably obserued, but for the
rest

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rest continuing stil his haunt of robbing, it happened once that being ouer matched by passingers, he had his head cut off, and they thinking they had made him sure, went on their way glorying in what they had done, whē behold, the head cried out, Confession, for the loue of God, Cōfession; when imagine in what affright they were, vnable a long while for amazement to stirr or moue, vntil at last they came vnto the next village, and certified the Curat of what had hapned; who running thither accompanied with many of his parishioners brought thither by Curiosity, behold, rhey hauing ioyned the head vnto the body, he with a loue and audible voice that al might heare him, sayd: vnderstand al of you, that
I ne-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 337

I neuer did any good in al my life,
but only in honour of the B. Vir-
gin fasting Saturdayes, for which
reason when my soule was is-
suing forth of my body, as it was
seperated from my head, and the
diuels ready to intercept it, were
al assembled, behold the B. Vir-
gin hindred them, nor would she
suffer it to issue forth of my body,
vntil by Cōfession it were expia-
ted of its crimes; and therupon
hauing confest himselfe, and de-
siring al the assistants to pray for
him, he exchanged this life for a
happier on.

This day then being particu-
larly consecrated to the honour
of the B. Virgin we should do
wel; to add vnto our fasts this de-
uotion of lowly inclining and re-
uerencing her; It being of such
P excellency

excellency as we haue declared before, of which each one may offer vp as many as his deuotion shal suggest, and time and place permit. How euer for the more certainty, might I prescribe them a taxed number, it should be the number of the Beads, to wit sixty three, in honour of those yeares, which (according to some Doctours) the B. Virgin liued vpon earth, and so it were best to number them vpon their Beads, performing them the while with that attention, as if the B. Virgin were really present there; and while they do it, they may at earth one pronounce those first words of the Angelical salutation *Aue Maria*, which some are of opinion the Angel pronounc't in actually bowing his knee and lowly reuerencing

rencing her, with bowing downe his head; But of this we shal speak more amply in the 11. chapter of this booke, where we shal teache an apt Method of putting in practise this exercise; and what I say of the Saturday, may be obserued when any of her lesser feasts occur.

As for the Greater feasts, the greater the solemnity is, with the greater deuotion we are to solemnize it; wherfore it were wel if on such dayes as those, we encreased to a hundred the number of those reuerences, it being a number much celebrated in the holy Scripture for perfect and mysterious; but I would not wishe you to performe them al at once, for feare of tediousnes, but to diuide them so, as both morning,

P 2 noone

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noone, afternoone, euening, and night, may haue its parting, which in the former number of sixty three I would likewise haue obserued, that we may come to it with fresh deuotion, and renue the memory of our B. Lady more affectionatly and often; And if the feast be celebrated with an Octaue, we may celebrat each day of the Octaue with this deuotion, when if we begin the vigil with a hundred and ten, and so continue the Octaue out, we shal make compleatly vp, the number of a thousand, a number perfect, sacred, and mysterious.

This excellent deuotion was most frequent with S. Margaret daughter of the king of Hungary Religious of the Order of Saint Dominick, who (as Doctor Querin

& serue the B. V. Mary. 341

rin of the same Order recounteth in her life, was so affectionatly deuoted to the Queene of heauen, as she no sooner sawe her Image in any place, but she presently kneeled downe before it, reciting in her honor the Angelical salutation, and on the Eues of her most solemne feasts she alwayes fasted with bread and water; from which day til the conclusion of the Octaue she sayd a thousand *Aue Marias*; at each one of which she humbly prostrated her selfe on the ground, making it her greatest delight next to honouring Alm. God, to honour his B. Mother.

*Of the Feasts of our Sa-
uiour Christ.*

CHAP. IX.



Vpon occasion of
treating of the feasts
of our B. Lady, I am
put in minde to
speake a word of the
feasts of our B. Sauour which we
are to honour aboue al the rest;
and with good reason, for if the
feasts of creatures (as we haue
sayd) may be celebrated in their
honour, how much is the Crea-
tour on his feast to be honou-
red? Al those deuotions we may
exercise on his feast, which we
haue

and serue the B.V. Mary. 343
haue taught to be exercised on
the feasts of our B. Lady : alwayes
prouided that we reuerence him
in a higher straine of *Latria*, only
proper to God himself: *Thou shalt
honour & serue the Lord thy God, &c*

The principal feasts of our Sa-
uiour Christ which are celebrated
with their Octaues are fve; the
Natiuity; the three Kings adora-
tion; the Resurrection; the As-
cension; & that of *Corpus Christi*.
or the blessed Sacrament of the
Eucharist; amongst which I place
in the highest ranke that of the
Natiuity, because on that, al the
Quires in heauen descended vnto
the earth, to adore their King
then an infant lying in the man-
ger or in his mothers lap. And so
the deuout soule that exerciseth
theis deuotions on that day, is to

frame a liuely imagination of the place imagining themselves in Bethleem, and adoring amongst the rest him, whom al both in heauen and earth adore.

The feast of the three *Kings* puts vs in minde of nothing but adorations, since on that day they al adored our Blessed Saviour in his Mothers lapp, and in them al the nations of the world; and with how much deuotion it was accompaigned may be gathered from this pathetical expression of it by the Euangelist Saint Mathew: *And entring into the house (sayd he) they found the infant with Mary his Mother, and falling on the ground adored him.*

The glorious *Resurrection*; to the dignity of which, al other feasts.

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feasts giue a kinde of pre-hemi-
nence, deserueth Adoration like-
wise; because on it our Sauour
rose againe al victorious and vi-
ctory, charged with the spoyles
of hel, while the Angels adored
him reioycing at his triumph, and
singing in his prayes their songs
of ioy.

And what should I say of his
most glorious *Ascension*, on
which our Lord and Sauour after
his victories, made his magnifi-
cent entrance into Heauen, and
there being seated at the right
hand of his Eternal Father, to
whom he was euery way equal
in power & vertue, al the heauēly
Hosts the while humbly incli-
ning before his Throne, did him
most profound honour and reue-
rence.

P v Now

Now let vs come to the feast of *Corpus Christi*, or the B. Sacrament, in which al the others are comprised, and consequently more then al the others we are to reuerence it. And is not this continually celebrated each day, and in each place (almost) throughout the world? do we not behold a world of Masses sayd, and people dayly communicating throughout al Christendome? do we not see in euery kingdome & almost euery litle village the B. Sacrament kept, and adored with vn-speakeable reuerence, where our Sauour Christ is as really present as he is in heauen, where Angels and Saints are incessantly adoring him. Wherefore we are neuer to enter into any Church, or passe by any Altar where the
B.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 347

B. Sacrament is kept, but we are humbly on our knees to reuerence it. And happy are those, who performe this deuotion not perfunctoriously, or for custome, as many do; but with gust of deuotion and from their harts, relishing the sweetnes of the exercise they do; perhaps they may deliuer some soule out of Purgatory by it; (with such deuotion it may be done) : which arriuing vnto heauen, wil there become perpetual intercessors for them to Alm. God; than which a greater benefitt cannot be imagined.

¶ But alas, (I cannot speake it without teares) we see Christians the while scarce vouchsafe to vncouer their heade or bend a knee before this B. Sacrament, so vnreuerent and weak they are in
their

their faith of it; Impudent and irreligious as they are, not to know how this mystery surpasses al discourse and al humane capacity, and that faith heer is al the light we haue. *Let faith Commend to vs what we can neither see nor comprehend*, sayes the holy Church in one of its Hymnes, and in another place: *Ad firmandum Cor sincerum, sola fides sufficit*: For to Confirm a hart sincere; only faith sufficient were. And yet how many cleare testimonies haue we had of the verity of this by euident miracle: sometimes it hath appeared in the forme of a litle child in the Preists hands at the Eleuation: some times the very beasts themselves (lesse beasts then some men therein) haue acknowledged their Lord and Creatour
in

& serve the B. V. Mary. 349
in it: as witnesse those Miracles
which I shal here recount.

At Paris in the yeare. 1258. a
certaine Preist saying Masse in a
Chappel adioyning to the Pal-
lace, as he eleuated the sacred
Host, a litle child of incredible
beauty appeared in the place of
it; Which Miracle being repor-
ted to S. Lewis King of France;
and some solliciting him to goe
and see it amongst the rest, he
made answer worthy of so pious
a Prince; Let those goe who
doubt of the reality of his being
there (says it); for my part I
behold him daily with the eyes
of faith.

The other Miracle happened
at Tholouse in Frāce, recorded in
the Chronicles of the Minims,
as also by Surius and diuers o-
thers

others, and it is this: S. Anthony of Padua being there, had a feare dispute one day with an obstinate heretike, denying the reality of our Sauours body in the B. Sacrament, who being vanquish't by the reasons of the Saints, Yet not willing to Confesse it; sayd vnto him; What need al these words and disputations by which although by Sophismes I Confesse I am ouercome, yet my reason remaines vn-conuinc'd: If then you wil do any good with me, let me see a miracle in confirmation of what you say, and I promise you I wil turne to your opinion; the Saint accepted of the condition, and confident that the Authour of the verity would not be wanting to the confirmation thereof, he bid the Heretick
to

& serue the B. V. Mary. 351

(to conuince him the more euidently) name himselfe what miracle he desired should be done; and he answered him, he had a mule at home, which he would keepe fasting three whole dayes, and then procure him in the publick market place, where let one of your Preists be (sayd he) with your God in the Sacrament, and if the mule refuse to eate of the oates I shal offer him, to adore him there, I wil promise you I wil be ready to adore him also; This was done, and at the fame of this, there being a mighty confluence of people from al parts to behold what the issue of it would bee; The day assigned being come, & al things ordered as was agreed vpon, the mule at sight of the oates euen wild with famine running.

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running towards them, and ha-
 uing taken some of them in his
 mouth, was in this manner con-
 iured by the Saint with the Bles-
 sed Sacrament in his hand : *In*
the name of God (sayd he) whom
I although unworthy hold heer be-
twixt my hands , I command thee
to leaue that prouinder , and come
presently hither to adore and reue-
rence him : When behold a most
 stupendious miracle , the beast
 not only forbore to eate any
 more , but euen let fal out of
 his mouth that prouinder it
 had , and ran presently bowing
 downe the head , and on his
 knees adored the holy and bles-
 sed Sacrament , to the vnspea-
 keable ioy and alacrity of al the
 Catholicks , the Hereticks con-
 fusion , and the conuersion of
 the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 393
the man.


Now *Friday* being the day dedicated to the memory of our Saviour in particular by reason of his death and passion; I would aduise the deuout Christian, besides his ordinary deuotions in honour of his five precious wounds to make five reuerences, which can not but be very meritorious and acceptable to the Maiesty of Alm. God.



of

Of the Feasts of Saints.

C H A P. X.

AVING spoken of the adoration of our B. Sauour, and his holy Mother, it will not be out of the way of my purpose, to say somewhat also of the adoration of Saints, since the holy Church celebrates them for no other end but to incite vs vnto their reuerence. This article of faith is confirmed and ratified by many Councils, and lastly by the Council of Trent in the 25. Section, where Angels and Saints are declared honourable
ble

ble with the reuerence of *Dulia* proper and appropriated vnto them.

On the dayes then when any Saints are to be honoured; especially the more principally sort of them, we are to do it with the foresaid reuerēces. On simple feasts and those of lesser obligation, it may suffice before we go to bed, to incline only once or twice in their reuerence; and when 'tis the feast of those to whom we haue any particular deuotion, or whom we haue chosen for Patron or Advocate, we ought with more particular Adoratiōs to honour them more or lesse according to the deuotion & affection of euery one.

Let al those then who desire with due reuerence to honour those Saints, to whom they are deuoted

deuoted, accustome themselues before they goe to bed, to make profound reuerence vnto them, imagining the while them really present, and beholding what they do; for so, although corporally they be not there, yet spiritually they are, and both wel know and vnderstand what is done in their honour there, and haue a particular care and protection of those that are deuoted vnto them, perpetually procuring for them fauours and assistances from Alm. God; & this verity is Orthodox, confirmed and approued by many Councels, and holy Doctours.

Now for the Saints Founders of Religious Orders, which by excellence are called Patriarcks, because as Abraham (for exāple) was stiled by that name for that
so

and serue the B. V. Mary. 357

so many people descended from him; so from them so many Religious are propagated in the Church: Of this sort is S. Benet, S. Augustine, S. Francis, and S. Dominick, and of later-yeares S. Ignatius, &c. Al which are to be had in highest veneration by those of their holy Orders, not only on the particular dayes when their feasts are honoured; but eue-ry day of the yeare besides; and that Religious man who desires to augment in him the deuotion: he hath to the Founder of his Order, should do wel; to assigne a particular day of the week for honouring him, & that Wednesday in particular, as the most conuenient for this effect; when with some extraordinary deuotion of fasting, praying, reuerēcing him,
and

and the like, he is to procure to honour him more particularly & referr vnto that end al which he doth that day, which finally hath reference al vnto the honour of our Sauour Christ, and to imploy some houres of the day in the meditation of the particular vertues of that Blessed Saint.

It is the general doctrine of the learned, that the Founder of each Religious Order hath a particular care not only of the Order in general, but also of each Religious in particular (more or lesse according as their merits are) and that they assidually defend them, strengthening their forces, and weakening the enemies who opugne and fight against them. Of which great priuiledge and prerogatiue Brother Leo in particular
had

and serue the B V. Mary. 359

had an excellent reuelation, vision of holy S. Francis, which I wil heer recount.

S. Francis being happily departed vnto rest, hauing rendred his body to the earth and his soule to heauen, Brother Leo one of his most affectionat disciples bearing impatiently the absence of one whom he loued so dearely wel, prayed instantly vnto Alm. God to make him so happy, that once more in this life he might enioy the happy aspect againe of his beloued Maister, and iterating his petition both earnestly & often; it pleased Alm. God; that one day he being retired into a solitary place, he beheld S. Francis appearing vnto him in a strange mysterious shape al shining with glorious light, but for the rest winged

winged with golden wings and tallonted both hands and feete with Eagles clawes; The Brother transported with ioy al sight of him, was running to embrace and kisse his hands and feete, but espying in what strange equipage they were, he al amazed demanded of the Saint, the reason why he appeared in that sort: the Saint answered againe, vnderstād these are no other then markes of the affection I beare my Order and the Religious thereof; and these do signifie, that amongst al the other riche prerogatiues his diuine Maiesty hath honoured me withal since my arriuing into heauen, one is the authority & power to vindicat my Religious from their necessities, and defend them from any aduersity that presses them,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 371

them, as often as with confidence they invoke my aide ; and these wings and tallons now I haue assumed, to signify my readines and promptitud in succouring mine, and the force and violence with which I oppugne al those who iniure them.

Good reason then haue the Children of this great Pattiarcke to reioice on earth, for hauing so powerful a protector of him in heauen, so louing a father, and so careful an Aduocate; I would aduise them to be assidual in honouring him with those reuerences of which we haue spoken; and particulary to salute him euery day with fise times bowing their knees vnto the ground in honour of the fise woūds so miraculoufly imprest vpon him while he liued,

Q reioycing

reioycing and congratulating with him for so highe and so sublime a dignity ; It being no doubt one of the most acceptable deuotions we can exhibit vnto him now he is in heauen.

*Of the Adoration of
the Angels.*

C H A P. XI.



AND if we be obliged to honour the B. Saints with that due reuerēce appropriated their worship, as we haue amply proued in the precedent Chapters; with farr more reason are we to honour the holy Angels,

& serue the B. V. Mary. 363

Angels, as the noblest in substance of al created things, and representing most liuely their Creatours vnlimited power and magnificence. And although it be true, that both men and Angels are both Creatures of Alm. God, and workes of that soueraigne Artificer; that they are either framed according to his Image, and by the faculties of their memory, vnderstanding, & their wil, capable of his grace and of being participant of his glory and eternal felicity; and that many circumstances there are, which equal Man with Angels; yea and in consideration of the Hypostatical vnion, and the Mother of our Sauour Christ, it may pretend some pre-eminence aboue them also. Yet if we weigh

Q 2 their

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their natures, and ballance them equally one against the other no doubt but we shal find the one farr exceeding the other; and as lead can neuer arriue to the excellency of siluer, nor siluer of gold: no more can a body any way equal in excellency a soule, nor the soule of man naturally speaking, the most inferiour Angel that is in heauen. Vnto which our B. Sauour infallibly alluded when he sayd: *Verily I say vnto you, amongst the sonnes of men hath not been borne a greater then Iohn Baptist; neuerthelesse the least in the Kingdome of heauen is farr greater then he.*

But now before we wade any further into this matter, we are to vnderstand, that the word *Adoration* is a notion general to good Angels

& serve the B.V. Mary. 365

Angels and men. In conformity, to which we find it in holy Scripture indifferently vsed for either; as where it is sayd that the Israelits *adored* both their king & God; *they bowed downe*, sayes he, *and adored God, and afterwards their King.* So the Children of Israel adored their brother Ioseph then Gouvernour of Ægypt; *& after his brothers had adored him, &c.* For which reason, the Doctours both ancient & moderne haue distinguished it into three seuerall species of Adoration; *Latria*, *Dulia*, and *Hyperdulia*; the *first* being exhibited only vnto God himselfe, as a soueraine kinde of adoration, only fitted to the soueraine power he hath; with the *second* we honour Saints and Angels; And as for the *third*, it appertaines to the

Q 3 B.

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B. Virgin alone, and vnto her who surpasseth in excellencie both Angels and al rest of Saints besides; and of this in the precedent Chapters we haue discours't at large.

In breefe then we establish this conclusion: we are to adore Angels and men deseruing it; and this is an Article of faith (according to Suares) defined by Pope Felix the first of that name in the Councel at Rome, the 7. th. Synod; And S. Augustine speaking of the B. Apostle S. Peter sayes: *An infinit number of the beleeuers adored the B. Fisher Peter.* And in another place: *Men merit (sayes he) to bee respected and honoured, and to say more, adored.* Conformable vnto which verity we finde in the holy scriptures many men
to

and serue the B.V. Mary. 367

to haue adored the Angels ; as Abraham in particular three, and Lot his brother two. So *Iosua* the famous Captaine of the Israelits adored one, who appeared to him in the likenes of a man ; he *fel prostrate on the ground, and adored him.*

Seeing then we really owe them this honour, let vs endeavour to discharge the debt, in honouring them with such frequent genuflexions, as our owne deuotions shal incline vs to, as the most excellent Creatures of heauen, ful of grace and glory and participant of the diuine nature.

And amongst al the motiues to incite vs to it, me thinkes one of the most principal should bee, the sublime priuiledges they are endowed withal in heauen. For if we consider their liues, we finde

Q 4 them

them to be incorruptible and immortal : of their nature and condition , they haue no body , and consequently are aboue al its necessities , and are superiour to al those miseries and afflictions to which we are subiect heere. If we cast our eyes on the agility and promptitud with which they operat , we shal see nothing in this vniuerse to equal them , and euen the heauens themselues come short of them , whose velocity we so much admire. But what should we say of the capacity excellency of their vnderstanding , that comprehend perpetually without discourse , and from the first instant of their Creations had a perfect knowledge of al natural things ? What of the constancy and efficacy of their Wil,
wher-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 369

wherwith they wil earnestly, what
foeuer they desire, and are irre-
uocable in al that they intend?
what of the tenacity of their me-
mory, which neuer forgetts what
it hath stored once? lastly what of
their so great and vnmeasurable
power, that one Angel only in a
night flew one hundred eighty
fue thousand of the Assyrians?
and which is more, that one one-
ly can turne with an incredible
facility the *primum Mobile*, in
comparison of which al this great
machin of earth and water is but
like a litle point: and that with
so euen and regular a motion,
that in so many thousand-yeares
was neuer obserued the least di-
sorder or deuiation. And to omitt
nothing that may conferr vnto
their honour, I wil heer declare

Q v the

the feveral orders of them and numbers which they containe.

In the first Hierarchy then: which is that which receiues immediatly the splendors and illustrations from Alm. God, there are three Quiers or Orders, to wit, the Seraphins, Cherubins, and Thrones: of which the Seraphins in feruor of charity excel the rest, the Cherubins in plenitude of knowledge, and the Thrones in seeing farthest into God the causes and origins of his diuine effects. In the second Hierarchy are likewise three other Quiers or Orders to wit, Dominations, Vertues, and Powers; In the third, three others, to wit, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. For we must vnderstand, though this name of Angel be com-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 371

common to al, yet in a more particular manner, to those of the third quire, it properly signifying a messenger, and so is rather a name of Office then nature, which because they are more ordinarily delegated to that function then the rest, hath a more particular reference vnto them.

Notwithstanding we must obserue, that S. Paul speaking of the superiour Quires of them sayes: that they are ministers of God, imployed for those who are to participat of his inheritance: which words of his S. Denis the Areopagite his disciple, S. Gregory, S. Iohn Damascene, and S. Thomas interpret thus: not that he meanes the first Quire of them are imploy'd immediatly with men; but the second receiue their intel-

intelligence from them; the third of them and of what they are to do. Yet S. Gregory Nazianzen, S. Cyprian S. Chrysoſtom, S. Augustine, and many other Doctors, are of opinion, that although ordinarily they are not imploy'd about the affaires of men, as the inferior are, Yet notwithstanding when any important buſines concerning them is to be done, Alm. God ſometymes imployeth them: as a Seraphin to purify the Prophet Iſa's lipps; the Archangel Raphael to accompany yong Tobias on his way; the Archangel Gabriel to Annuntiat to the B. Virgin the diuine myſtery of our Sauours Conception; and laſtly, S. Michael in a particular manner to haue a care and protection of the Church.

Now

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Now if the diuision of their quires and Orders be so admirable and great, farr more admirable and great is the number of them, which none can truely tel but Alm. God himselfe, although many haue giuen a guesse therat. Certaine it is, that if God for the Conueniency thereof hath furnished this inferiour world with such infinit diuersity of creatures corporal, much more abundantly would he store the superiour world with creatures immaterial and spiritual, inuisible and incorruptible, such as the Angels are.

And for their Number, I leaue you to coniecture it, from this Consideration how this world in comparison of that, is no more than the Center point is in respect

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pest of an infinit Circonference
and consequently how many In-
habitants must goe more to that
then this. And so Iob speaking
of them sayes : *There is a multitud
of his soldiers:* And if the Maiefty of
a King on earth, is declared most
in the number of those that serue
and fight for him, as the Holy
Ghost in expresse termes affir-
mes : *The dignity of a king Consists
in the multitud of his people, and in
the smal number of them the Princes
shame.* We must needs conclude
then to be infinit, in respect of
the Maiefty of Alm. God. Tou-
ching their number in particular,
I wil heer declare what Albertus
Magnus amongst other Doctors
hath left written of them. She
sayes then, that there are nine
Quires of Angels, and that euery
quire

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quire hath its Legions, that each Legion of them cõtaines. 6666. and that there are, as many Legions in euery Quire as there are Angels in a Legion. Others saye, there are ten times more in the second Quire then in the first in the third then in the second, and so with proportion to the highest Quire. So as there being, for example, in the Quire of Angels fower and forty millions, foure hundred thirty five thousand, five hundred fifty sixe Angels; that of Archangels hath tentymes as many; that of the Principalties as farr in number exceeds them, &c. Who is not ready to issue out of himselfe, with admiration of such infinit multitude exalted by Alm. God for his seruice and our benefite? and who
entring

entring into himselfe againe, can comprehend with what profound reuerence they serue his diuine Maiesty of which Iob speaking sayes : *Those who moue the heauens, bow downe and lye prostrata before him, and the Pillars of heauen tremble at his sight.* So the Royal Prophet speaking of their readines & promptitud in executing his cōmands, sayes of them : And yee Angels praise our Lord, who are so powerful in performing of his wil, and obey so faithfully the voice of his commands. And this is the first reason, that should incite vs to render them seruice and reuerence.

The second yet is more forcible, and that is, our many obligations to them for their many good Offices don vs perpetually,
which

and serue the B.V. Mary. 377

which although it be at the appointment of Alm. God, and they in their performance are but his Ministers; yet they being deriued vnto vs by them, from the foueraigne fountaine from whence al our good proceeds, we are to receiue them from them most gratefully, & with a thankful acknowledgement. I wil not inlarge this Chapter to summe them vp, but remit the Reader to the holy Scripture, where they shal find them recorded both very particularly and frequently. Now let vs come to the exercise of this deuotion. To render them then that honour which is due to the aboundance and sublimity of Glory which they haue, in being of so neere accesse to God the fountaine of
it

it al, and participating by it of his diuine nature; we are (to do wel) for to retire our selues, and there recollecting vs in the interiour of our soule, (excluding al earthly cogitations) to be the whilst the more in heauen, we are to imagine their Orders and array, their beauty, sublimity, riches, splendour, and in fine their glory and admirable perfection, and thus discourse within our selues: this Quire then the rest, is more sublime, this more specious, this fuller of merit and luster, with a thousand other considerations on a subiect of such great worth and amplitud. Then we are to salute them troupe after troupe, with a comportment full of reuerence and respect, making the longer stay,
where

and serue the B.V. Mary. 379

where our deuotions shal detaine vs longest, either amongst the Seraphins, Cherubins, &c. Congratulating with them their great splendours and prerogatiues; and afterwards prostrating our selues before the throne of God, we are to praise and render him humble thanks for creating creatures so perfect and excellent for his seruice and the honour of his Court.

The like manner of proceeding we may vse in honouring the Saints, as Patriarcks Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours. Virgins, and the like, especially those which we are most deuoted vnto, addressing vs to them, by the foresayd acts of congratulation, and adoring them, and taking delight to maintaine discourse with them in our harts, commu-

communicating with them our affaires and necessities, and instantly commending our selues to their prayers: seeing (according as the Doctours affirme) they behold in God, and know al our necessities, our most secret wishes, and the affections of our harts, and al the reuerences and actions we doe in honouring them.

Besides, I thinke it fitt, and would counsel it to the zealous Catholicke, who desires to go on, in honouring these B. spirits; to prescribe to himselfe a certaine number in reuerencing them; as that of Nine in honour of the nine Quires of them, &c. But because the holy Church makes reuerent mention of three of them in particular, S. Michael, S. Gabriel,

& serue the B. V. Mary. 381

Gabriel, and S. Raphael; I would
consel to begin with them: As
first, with S. Michael, who is
Prince of al the rest, seeing as
Laurentius Iustinianus sayes, al-
though we are to honour al the
souldiers of heauen, yet their Ge-
neral deserues more peculiar re-
uerence, for the greatnes & high-
nes of his qualityes and preroga-
tiues, his inuincible force, the
singular loue which his fouerai-
gne Emperour beares him, and
finally for his fidelity to his ser-
uice and admirable valour; of
which he gaue so rare proofes in
that great battaile he fought a-
gainst the Infernal enemy and al
his followes. And certainly with
good cause doth the holy Church
so reuerence him, acknowled-
ging him for her protectour, and
one

one that receaues into his patronage al departed foules that die in grace and the fauour of God almighty. Next S. Gabriel, as he that had that happy embassage committed to his charge of Annunciating to the B. Virgin the Incarnation of the sonne of God. Thirdly, S. Raphael the guide & defender of Pilgrims in this life, as he did by the yong Tobias in al his pilgrimage.

If thou be then desirous to performe these deuotions, and hast retired they selfe to performe them the better, putting thy self in their presence (as it were) who really behold at al times what we doe; thou art twelue tymes to bow downe and do reuerence honouring by the first Adoration S. Michael, General of
the

and serue the B. V. Mary. 38;
the host of heauen; by the second,
S. Gabriel, who brought the Em-
bassage of our saluation; by the
third, S. Raphael, and by the rest
in their seueral Orders the nine
Quires of Angels, &c.

For the better performance
thereof, I wil heer set downe a
most easy method (for al sorts of
people,) of this deuotion.



The

*The practising of honouring
and reuerencing the An-
gels: saying as followeth.*



HONOUR and re-
uerence you, O Glo-
rious *Saint Michael*,
cheife of al the An-
gels.

I honour and reuerence you
Blessed *S. Gabriel*, for deliuering
that so grateful Embassage to the
B. Virgin.

I honour and reuerence you,
affable *S. Raphael*, for rendring to
the yong Tobias so cleere a testi-
mony of Alm. Gods ineffable
goodnes to man,

I ho-

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I honour and reuerence you
most ardent *Seraphins*, who burne
continually in the flames of the
loue of God.

I honour and reuerence you
most holy *Cherubins*, who in cleer
knowledge and plenitud of the
science of God surpasse al other
Angels.

I honour and reuerence you
most happy *Thrones*, seing in you
the eternal Maiestie doth repose,
and by you our foules are dispo-
sed to peace and tranquillity.

I honour and reuerence you
most noble *Dominations*, who by
the great authority bestowed on
you by Alm. God, rule al other
spirits of inferiour ranke.

I honour and reuerence you
most powerful *Vertues*, who are
deputed by the soueraigne King
R of

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of heauen to the regency and
gouernement of al the souldiers
in heauen.

I honour and reuerence you
most valiant *Powers*, who by your
might repress the insolency of
the powres of hel, and oppose
your selues to al the machina-
tions & designs they haue vpon
vs continually.

I honour and reuerence you
invincible *Archangels*, to whom
is giuen the protection and care
of people, & Kingdomes, and to
reueale vnto them for their good
most sublime mysteries.

I honour and reuerence you
likewise most humble *Angels*,
who disdain not to cōuerse with
men, and vndertake their patro-
nage and protection.

But if any be so defectiue of me-
mory

& serue the B. V. Mary. 387

mory, as not to be able to retayne
by hart what is before sett downe,
It wil suffice only to saye: I ho-
nour and reuerence you O glo-
rious S. Michael; I honour and
reuerence you O glorious S. Ga-
briel; and so of al the rest, only
adding the simple names of Sera-
phin, Cherubin, Thrones, Do-
minations, Vertues, Powers,
Principalities, &c. So likewise
they may, more to facilitat the
memory, begin with the lower
Quires, and so by degrees ascend
to those more highe. And if there
be any yet so wanting memory
that they cannot remember this,
it may suffice they make nine re-
uerences, with intention to ho-
nour each Quire of Angels by it,
without pronouncing any word
at al, but only imagining with
R 2 them,

themselves ; now I honour the first Quire, now the second, and now the third, &c.

Now it rests , that we assigne one day of the weeke for the exercise of this Deuotion ; and what more proper thē that the Church hath appointed to honour the B. Angels on ? to witt , the Tewf-day : Let that then be it , and on that day let vs most particularly honour them, those that al Preists saying Masse of the Angels for them, those of the laity deuoutly hearing it, &c.

And because Psalmody is exceeding grateful to them , (: if it be accompanied with due attention of spirit;) those who are imployed in that laudable exercise, are to endeauour to comport themselves with al due reuerence
and

and serue the B. V. Mary. 389

and deuotion; imagining themselves in presence of the Angels while they are performing it: *I wil sing Psalmes in the presence of Angels, I wil adore in his holy Temple, and praise his holy name.* And to this accords wel that which we reade of S. Bernard in the hystory of the illustrious men of the Cistercians, how he sawe the B. Angels, while *Te deum* was sung, to goe from one Quire to another, encouraging the Religious to sing it with feruour and deuotion: Another tyme he sawe them busily writing downe what the Religious pronounced, those in golden better which were pronounced with force of spirit and from the hart, those in siluer which were vttered with attention but not such feruour as the

R; former

former were; those in inke, which proceeded from them with a litle admixture of distraction; and those finally in puddle-water, which were pronounced without al sense of deuotion. Moued then, by this example, and knowing that the B. Angels are assistant at our deuotions, let vs performe them with such a spirit, not only worthy of the Oratory that we are in, but also of the Company that is there. Happy and thrice happy are they who shal so honour them, since they shalbe rewarded for it, not only by the Angels intercessions in heauen continually for them; but also by their assidual assistance of them heer, from al dangers both of bodily and ghostly enemies, til at last receiuing vs at the honour
of

and serue the B.V. Mary. 391
of our deaths, they take vs out
of this transitory and miserable
life, and tranfferr vs to a happy
and eternal en.

*Of the honour and reuerence
we owe vnto our Angel
Guardian.*

CHAP. XII.



AND who sees not,
how reasonable it
is, in lieu of so ma-
ny benefits we re-
ceiue from them, to
honour and reuerence the B. An-
gels for it; and in particular our
Angel Guardian, who hath the
R 4 care

care & protection of vs cominit-
ted to his charge. For certaine it
is, & auerred by al learned men,
that (excepting our B. Sauour)
each man hath his peculiar An-
gel attending stil on him: whence
we may perceiue, how great is
the goodnes and charity of Alm.
God towards man; who (we being
such contemptible creatures as
we are) hath not only been con-
tented to create the Elements for
our seruice, mixt bodies for our
vse, and finally al corporal crea-
tures els; but also hath enchar-
ged the holy Angels with our
protection and defence, creatu-
res so excellent, so sublime in
glory, wisdome, and power, to be
our instructours in vertue, and
our guides to truth.

But if goodnes be to be ad-
mired

& serue the B. V. Mary. 393

mired in bestowing them vpon vs; no lesse admirable is his power in creating them in such innumerable multitudes, that the very lowest Quire of them is sufficient to furnish with Angels guardiāns, not only al the men that are, but al that haue been or shal be as long as the world shal last: so according to the probable coniecture of the learned, there being a matter now of some million million of soules in al the world, not only euery one of them hath an Angel guardian, but one so particularly vnto himself, as he was neuer Guardian to any one before, nor euer shalbe to any after him; God whensoever he creates a soule, appointing a peculiar Guardian that neuer in that office was imployed before. And

R v who

who can imagine then, how many millions of millions there must be to serue for so many millions of men, that haue been & shal be vntil the general Iudgement day? And this opinion is the more probable, not only because of Gods omnipotēce which is more illustrated thereby, but also of a certaine congruency on the Angels part, who if they should not suffice in number to afford each one a Guardian, it would follow that the number of men would exceed that of them, which would argue a deficiencie in them, and take from that proportion by which it is supposed, that as the Archangels exceed the Angels ten to one, &c. so there should be ten times more of Angels then of men,

The

and serue the B.V. Mary. 395

The necessity we stand in of their celestial aide, is great and vrgent; first because our soules are spiritual, and consequently spirits can best see their necessities next because we our selues are weake and ignorant of the force and imagination of the Enemy to ensnare and ouercome vs were it not for them; Who watching continually by vs obserue al their wayes, and carefully meete them with preuention.

But heere some may object, how can they be continually by vs when our Saviour sayes, they continually behold the face of Alm. God, in whose vision consists their cheifest beatitud: *Angeli eorum semper vident faciem Patris mei qui in celis est.* To this I answer

swer, with S. Gregory, that it is true the Angels are stil in heauen, euen when corporally they are employed elf-where; else we could not reconcile that other place of Scripture with this, where it is sayed; that God imployes them on his Embassages heer on earth; so as while in contemplation of the heavenly essence they are stil in heauen, we must grant them really the while to be on earth.

And to incite in vs a greater deuotion towards them, I will endeavour to summe vp the many good offices they dayly do vs; which although infinit in themselves, may yet be reduced to three heads. The first is; they deliuer vs from many eident dangers, by their careful custody of
vs,

and serue the *B. V. Mary.* 397

vs, which the holy Prophet testifies where he sayes: *He hath giuen his Angels charge of thee, to looke to thee in al thy wayes, and beare thee in their handes least thou shouldst dash thy foote against a stone.* And heer let each one Cal to minde, how many-fold dangers they haue escaped Heer, one the falling of a house vpon his head, which if he had not sodainly changed his mind; he had gone iust vnder it as it did fal; and to whom can he attribute this change of mind, but to his Angel Guardian: Another, being prepared to goe some voyage puts it off, he knowes not why, and afterwards vnderstands that if hee had gone, he had falne into the hands of Pirats or of theeues, and this was the worke of his good Angel also; with a
hundred

hundred others the like. Which the Patriarke Iacob acknowledged to come from his Angel keeper, when blessing the children of his sonne Ioseph he sayd: *The Angel who hath preserved me from al euil, blesse these children, &c.* And so did Iudith returning victorious from Holofernes campe. So it hath seemed good vnto our Lord (saide she) whose Angel hath guarded me, in going forth, in remayning there, and in returning backe.

And though the B. Angels care extends it-selfe as wel vnto the bad as to the good, yet notwithstanding they more specially impart their aide vnto the iust; as the Psalmist testifies where he sayes: *Qui habitat in adiutorio Altissimi, &c.* Who dwelleth in the aide of the Highest, remaynes in the prote-

& serue the B. V. Mary. 399

protection of the God of heauen: And there is no doubt, but God hath a most particular care of the iust and vertuous, and consequently commends them in a most deare manner vnto their Angels Guardians; as may be gathered out of that passage of holy Scripture: He hath giuen his Angels charge of you, &c. As if he would saye, those who are Gods faithful seruants, may goe securely in the midst of dangers, for God hath giuen the charge vnto his Angels to haue especial care of them. Whether they sleepe, or wake, they need not feare; for being in this particular protection of God and their Angel Guardian, it may be sayd vnto them: They may walke on the Aspick and the Basiliske, and tread the Lion & Dragon vnder their feet.

What

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What a wonderful priuiledge is this? to be able to contemne the Aspick and Basiliske, which euen kils with its sight, and the Lion and Dragon the most formidable of al other beafts? and who restraynes the killing lookes of the one, or cohibits the others fiercenes, but only our Angel Guardian?

The *second* benefit which we receiue from them, is the wholesome Counsel and aduice, which they are stil infusing into our minds. And of this we haue a cleere example in the Angel that accompanied Tobias on his way, and gaue him such wise and prudent instruction, in point of his mariage, how he should comport himselfe with his new spouse for to escape the fate which

and serue the B.V. Mary. 401

which had sent so many of her husbands vnto death: as namely, that he was to begin his mariage (quite contrary to the custome now a dayes) with watchings, prayers, and deuotion. In the like manner an Angel Guardian is continually suggesting wholesome counsels vnto vs, now deterring vs from euil, now inciting vs to good, which without their incitement we should neuer doe; now proposing to vs the example of our Sauour Christ before our eyes, now of some other Saint, for to awake our Imitation; then inflaming our wils to embrace the occasion of imitating them; lastly, they go somtymes spurring vs on by the consideration of the mercy of Alm. God; & now refrayning vs againe
by

by that of his iustice and seuerity; so euer directing euen our course betwixt heauen and hel, that neyther the consideration of the one extoll vs too much, nor the other too much depresse vs.

And tel me now, haue you neuer experienced, when you were about to committ any greeuous crime, a remorse of Conscience, and certaine shrinkings backe, and bidding vs forbear? and what should this be; but our Angel Guardian, appointed to this office by Alm. God? Besides, how oftentymes may we imagine God offended with our crimes, to haue been in mind to haue pluck't vs from the earth, like vnfruitful trees, and throwne into the fire of Eternal hel, had it not been for their interceding
for

and serue the B.V. Mary. 403

for vs ? like him who sayd vnto the man in the parable, being minded to pluck vpp his figg-tree, which for three yeares he had obserued never to haue borne fruit that he should haue, patience with it another yeare, and after he had cultivated it, if it bore not fruit he should doe his pleasure with it; The Doctours in explicating this passage saye: We are these vnfruitful trees, Alm. God the Lord of the Orchard, and our Angel Guardian he that intercedes and vndertakes for vs: Imagine then how much we contristat him if we be wanting vnto his promises and to the hopes which he conceiues of vs

The third and last benefit for which we are liable to our Angel

gel Guardian is, that he accom-
panies vs perpetually from the
houre of our birth to the final pe-
riod of our liues, and neuer aban-
dons vs euen when we are aban-
doned by euery one besides; and
such a freind we haue of him, as
the world hath none; For behold a
beautious Virgin in the flower of
her yeares and pride of her beau-
ty, how many, seruants she hath
that make court to her, and with
what obsequiousnes they obserue
her, til that flower fading, and
the winter of her yeares and de-
cayes of age fall on her beauty
once, they fall of as fast, and she
is left only to solitud and neglect;
who was before the only one fre-
quented, and to whom al res-
pects were payd. Whereas our
good Angel is so constant a freind
of

and serue the B.V. Mary. 405
of ours, as no change of fortune
qualifyes, or time makes vs goe
lesse with him, but he is euer the
same, and neuer alters in loue
vnto vs, euen when he sees vs ha-
ted of God and man; and the rea-
son of this, is, because he knowes
not as yet the final reprobation
of him whom he hath in charge,
otherwise he would not haue such
care of wicked men, as most cer-
taine it he hath.

Another benefit for which we
stand infinitely obliged vnto the
is, that they carefully present our
Petitions vnto Alm. God our al-
mes, watchings, and al our good
works we doe; which by those
words of the Angel to Tobias is
rendred euidēt: *When thou prayedst
with teares, and buriedst the dead,
when thou didst leaue thy repast, and
didst*

didst conceale the dead by day in thy house; and didst bury them by night, I offred thy prayer vnto our Lord. And this by that mystical ladder of Iacob was vnderstood, where the Angels were seen ascending and descending, betwixt heauen and earth, to signifie the continual commerce they haue with either for our auayle, not by local motion, but by a farr more ready way. Sometimes one Angel presents to Alm. God the generous victory of this man ouer his temptations; another sayes, behould, O Lord, the profitable vse which this soule makes of that precious bloud you shed for it vpon Mount Caluary, and of al those other graces which with so liberal a hand you haue bestowed on it; A third cries out, Good Lord receiue

and serue the B. V. Mary. 407.

ceiue this charitable persons almes bestowed vpon you in the person of the poore, or these deuout teares shed only out of an affectionat loue of you; Another finally present the oblation of this good Religious person in wholly renouncing al worldly commodities, or this Preists pietie and zeale, in offering vp the holy sacrifice of the Masse, or meditating our Sauours Passion; and this the Canon of the Masse confirms saying: *Iube hac perferri per manus sancti Angeli tui in sublime Altare tuum in conspectu diuinae maiestatis tuae*: Command this to be carryed by the hand of your holy Angel to your sublime Altar in the sight of your diuine Maiestie, &c.

And as they are assistant to vs
during

during our liues, so at our deaths are they much more powerfully defending vs from al the assaults of the Internal Enemy; as testifies B. Aloysius Gonzaga of the Societie of Iesus, in that his deuout meditation of our Angel Guardian where hee sayes, that our Angel Custos at the time of our death is most diligent in assisting vs against the Enemy, preserving vs cheifly from those two sinnes which are most incident to men in that article of time, Infidelity and despaire, to the end that making heer a happy end they may repaire with them to heauen, vnto their euerlasting habitation; And in prosecuting his discourse he sayes, that as soone as the soule once is free from the captiuity of the body,
its

'and serue the B.V. Mary. 409

its Angel presently conducts it to the Tribunal of Alm. God, animating and encouraging it on the way, to put its cheifest confidence in the merits of the sacred blood of our Sauour Christ; and if it chance (the better to be purified from its finnes) to be adiudged vnto the purging flames, he visits it often there, comforts it, brings it the suffrage and succour of those prayers and merits which are offred for it in the other world, and encourages in midst of its sufferances, with the hope it can not be long in suffering; and in fine when the time is expired, he conducts it out, and al bright and purified leades it vnto heauen, and in the twinkling of an eye, presents it vnto Alm: God to receaue from him

S the

the Crowne of eternal beatitud,
prepared from al eternitie for
those, who heer sighe after it in
this vale of teares. O happy and
a thousand tymes happy is that
soule, which hauing been faithful
to its Creator, and pliant to his
hand to be ledd whither soeuer
his least motion carried it, in fol-
lowing his good Angel for guide
leauing the world ful of the ver-
tue of his example arriues at last
vnto that Kingdome of eternal
felicity, where with God and his
Saints it shal for euer raigne.

But now touching the practise
of this particular deuotion to our
Angel Guardian; first being as-
sured that we are committed to
his Regencie, and that so noble
and excellent a creature, as al the
eloquence of the world rather di-
minishes

& serue the B. V. Mary. 411

minishes then add to its cōmendations, vouchsafes to keep vs perpetuall company, and defends vs from al euil, with his careful watchings & his comfortable aduise, we are on our parts to endeauour a requital: First, by comporting our selues with al deuotion and due respect vnto his presence and next honouring him with al competent honour. Let vs then consider if we stood perpetually in the sight of some earthly Prince or Monarke; how careful we should be so to compose our outward behauour, as might render vs most grateful in his sight; & with how much more care and diligence ought we in the presence of our Angel Guardian to comport our selues? Heare what S. Bernard sayes in explication of these

S 2 words:

words: For he hath giuen his *Angels* charge ouer thee to guard thee in al thy wayes, &c. O mortal man, sayes he, what reuerence, what deuotion and confidence art thou to conceiue in thy breast from these comfortable words of the Royal Prophet; reuerence in standing in presence of thy Angel, deuotion for his loue of thee, & confidence for his care. Be therefore vigilant neuer to exceed the bonds of thy respect while these holy spirits are alwayes in thy sight by the appointment of Alm. God himselfe attending them thy preservation in al thy wayes, and wheresoeuer thou art, either in priuat or publique, be alwayes careful neuer to commit that indecency before him, which before me thou wouldest not doe. Thus S. Bernard in
his

his deuout and pious manner.

Secondly, we are to honour them with these reuerences we haue formerly treated of, which may|be best performed when into priuat we haue retir'd our selues; especially before we retire, our selues to rest with a profound inclination we are to say, *Angele Dei, qni Custos es mei, &c.* beseeching him to keep vs in our sleepe from the assalts of the Enemy, that euer watches to harne and mischief vs; so when we awake, we are to commend our selues vnto them that day following, & whatsoeuer busines we are to undertake, that it may sort a wished conclusion; and we should do wel often to commend vnto them in some vocal manner a deuout conception of our hart in our occur-

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rant necessityes, beseeching them to assist vs in the mannage of this or that particular affaire.

This deuout custome had one Alexander Luzaqua an Italian Gentleman of a most holy and vertuous life, that as often as he saluted any man, he mentally intended that reuerence vnto his Angel Guardian whom he saluted; and an excellent consideration it was, to thinke a celestial spirit, more worthy the salutation then an earthly worrne. Let vs imitate this deuotion, and in saluting any say thus in our minds I offer this reuerence to the Angel Guardian that attends vpon him or her whom I salute. And most happy it wil be for vs if we do so, for by this meanes we shal indeare our selues in the loue and care.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 415
care of those B. spirits, who can
do more for our real aduance-
ment and good, then al the world
besides.

*In what manner we are to
proceed in the exercise of
these Adorations, Worthi-
ly to honour the Mother
of Alm. God.*

C H A P. XIII.



VE being composed
of two parts, the su-
perior & inferior,
of body and soule by
the singular proui-
dence and goodnes of Alm. God,

S 4 that

that we might honour him with both, both heer and in the world to come; a great part of our corporal honour Consists in these fore sayd Adorations, which not only the Saints haue practised, but euen our B. Sauour himself, we oftē reade how he bowed of whom his knees vnto his eternal father, and prostrated on the ground; as namely the night preceding his Passion, when according to the Euangelist S. Luke : *He kneeled and fel prostrated on his face.* And. SS. Matthew & Marke; *he prostrated on the ground*: by which words we may gather, how our Sauour reuerenced his eternal Father *in spiritu & veritate*, in spirit and verity, with each part both of body and soule.

Let the deuout Christian then
desirous

and serue the B.V. Mary. 417

desirous to render honour to the B. Virgin, accompany his interior deuotion of the soule, with the exterior of the body; & first, when thou art retired in secret, for so, *when thou wouldst Pray, enter into thy chamber*, sayes the holy Scripture; thou art to begin with this Consideration, how excellent she is, whom thou art to reuerence, and the excellency of the reuerence thou exhibit'st to her, which the whole Court of heauen take for highest honour to be imployed in. And touching the excellency of her, thou art to consider her large portion of glorie aboue al the other Saints, and represent her to the eies of thy mind, Inthroned in a most glorious manner aboue al the rest, as becomes the soueraine Em-

S v presse

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preſſe of them al; al ful of glory
and of Maieſtie, encompassed
round about with innumerable
Saints and Angels perpetually
making Court to her, and honou-
ring her with humble reuerences;
amongſt whom thou art to ima-
gine they ſelfe, and making thy
firſt approches of adoring her,
without vttering any word, but
only fixing thy mind vpon her
excellent beauty and Maieſty,
procuring to begett in thy mind
the whilſt frequent acts of affec-
tionat loue and complacency in
ſo much beauty and Maieſty as
thou conceiu'ſt to be in her, con-
gratulating with her that her
high dignity of being Mother of
God, and conſequently Queene
of heauen and earth; Acts which
if they be performed with due in-
tention

and serue the B.V. Mary. 419

tention and deuotion, it is impossible to imagine how grateful they wil be to her, and how profitable for those who are exercised therein.

We haue an example of a deuout Religious woman recounted by F. Heroide Dominican) who being afflicted with a greeuous malady after much paine and sufferance died thereof, whose soule appearing some dayes after to the sub-Prioresse of the Conuent said amongst other discourses; Know, Mother, that the reward which Alm. God bestowes vpon the least good work of ours, is so excessiue great, as if it were putt to my choice; I would returne euen from the ioyes of heauen vnto the earth againe, and suffer al my former afflictions, only to recite

one

one *Aue Maria*, that returning thence againe, I might acquire a new merit by it in heauen, and this, although I were not certaine to say it without tepidity or distraction, so that I were but in grace the while, and free from al mortal sinne. And if this holy Religious woman would haue exposed her self to such cruel paine and sufferances, only for the merit of so smal an act, how great shal their merit be, who exercise themselves in this deuout exercise of reuerencing her, being one of the greatest & most excellent seruices which a Christian can render vnto the Mother of God.

Hitherto we haue treated of the interior cōportment of the mind during this our actual reueencing
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 421
the B. Virgin; Now let vs come
to the exterior of the body. First,
we are to bow the knee, in cros-
sing our hands before our breast
with a litle inclination of the
head; and after hauing prayed in
that māner, we are to rise agayne,
and iterat the same deuotion for
the second time, and so forwards
as our deuotion shal instruct vs;
the which Adorations we like-
wise may performe only with bo-
wing one knee to the ground,
ioyning of our hands, and fixing
of our thoughts on the Maiestie
of the B. Virgin the while; and
if any through infirmity find dif-
ficulty in these inclinations, they
may helpe themselves by leaning
or the like, or only bow downe
their body, or make some light
inclination with the head.

Alwayes

Alwayes remembering that this
exteriour behauiour is not the
cheifest thing we are to regard,
but that which is proceeding
from the interiour, as the words
pronounc't, or by the hart or
mouth the whilst, now saying: I a-
dore you Ô sacred Mother of God;
& repeating it as oftē as we make
our reuerēces, or els pronouncing
these two words only of *Aue Ma-*
ria, with which the Angel Ga-
briel saluted her, and in that re-
uerent manner (it is supposed)
which we heer prescribe to her
deuout seruants to imitat: so
doing we shal performe that An-
gelical office too, as wel as he,
nay in a manner more excellent,
for he saluted her but as a hum-
ble Virgin, we as the Mother of
God, and daughter of the most
holy

& serue the B.V. Mary. 423

holy Trinity ; he in the lowly house of Nazareth , and we in the highe Court of heauen , where she sits maiestically enthroned and crowned Queene of the whole Vniuerse; he finally while she was yet subiect to mortality and the incommodities it goes annex't withal, but we now when she is aboue it, participant of eternal life glory and felicity. Great then is their prerogatiue who salute her so , and great shal their merit bee , if they do it with that due deuotion and reuerence , as they ought.



How

*How in the like manner We
are to reuerence God, as
also the Saints in Heauen.*

C H A P. XIV.



HAVING spoken of the Interiour & Exterieur reuerences, we are to honour the Mother with al : Let vs make application of them vnto God himfelfe with the foueraine honour of *Latria* due to his most diuine Maiestie. We must then procure to reuerence him so, as these exterior deuotions may proceed from the redundancy of the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 425

the Interiour; to which effect before we put in practise the fore-said reuerences, we are to fixe our interiour eyes on the Maiesty of Alm. God, considering his immense greatnes & incomprehensible perfections in which we are infinitely to take complacence; as in his being what he is, so exceeding good, & so exceeding great; and then we are to accompany this Interiour act of ours with most profound reuerences and inclinations, bowing euē vnto the ground before that Maiesty, before whose glorious Throne the Angels themselves, *adore in prostrating their faces on the ground.*

And to acquit our selues the better of this deuotion, we are especially euery morning when we rise, as at night when we retire
to

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to rest, most profoundly to reuerence this our Alm. Lord, and whilst we remaine in that humble posture on our knees, we are to cast the eyes of our mind with an affectionat regard on that high & incomprehensible Maiestie, so to begett interiour acts of Ioy and complacency of the soueraigne power he hath, and soueraigne goodnes accompanying it.

And this let vs do, as often as we bow our knees in reuerencing Alm. God, accompanying it stil with some interiour act of the loue of him, an act, which no creature in heauen and earth can truly imagine the excellency of it; being an operation which God continually is exercising in himselfe, to wit of ioy and complacencie in his infinit goodnes,

nes, whence doth proceed the loue of it which must likewise be infinit; These acts of loue then let vs endeauour to stirr vp in our selues, and assure our selues that the least of them is sufficient to rayse a soule to a most highe degree of perfection.

As witnesseth this story extracted out of the second part of the Chronicles of the Friars Minors. A certaine Religious matron beheld in vision thirty Religious of the Conuent of Paris al departing this life at once, whereof fve only were cōdemned to Purgatory, the rest went al immediatly to heauen; & one amongst the rest had his place assigned him amongst the Seraphins: She being returned from her vision and astonished thereat, had recourse

course to the Guardian of the Friars where she liued, and declared vnto him al that she had seen; who like a prudent man, aduised her, to beseech Alm. God in continuation of his former fauour to reveale vnto her the name of him who was so highly aduanced aboue the rest; therby more particularly to know the truth of the vision: she did so, & it was reuealed vnto her that his name was *Venance*; here-vpon the Guardian dispatcht an Ex-presseto Paris to informe him of those who were lately dead in that Cōuent; whose nūber being giuen him vpp, he found them exactly to agree with that of the Vision; and that this *Venance* was only a simple lay Brother amōgst the rest, whose Office was to haue
care

care of the Friars habits , and mend them when they were torne ; which it seemes he had executed with such charity, as he had merited by it that highe place in heauen.

Now if this good Religious man, in exercising this slight and manual Office could merit so high a degree of glory , those who are exercesed in this Angelical deuotion which we treat of, if they do it with that attention as they ought , how farr more high an one must they needs merit by it? And for our encouragement , it were good to consider, how farr more profitably we may be exercised in it, then the blessed Angels whose continual imployment it is : for they with all that they can do, can never aduāce
higher

higher by it, an Angel can neuer become an Archangel, an Archāgel can never sitt equal with the Thrones, nor a Cherubin in fine be embraced with the fire of a Seraphin; whereas we may not only accumulat merits so; to rayse vs from men to Angels, but euen surpasse them themselues, and being eleuated higher then Principalities and Thrones, become euen equal with the Seraphins: and by this only exercise may al this be effected.

So likewise may we apply this deuotion to the honour of *Dulia* proper to the Saints, by the only turning of the minds intention, and this more particularly on the dayes wheron they are honoured, and their feasts are celebrated; when besides these external reuerences

rences we are to procure to honour them from our hearts, by elicit acts from thence of congratulation for their felicities, and thanksgiuing vnto Alm. God for hauing predestinated thē from al eternity to that high dignitie to which he hath promoted them, & to which they haue arriued, by so many vertuous and meritorious wayes, leauing to vs their Imitation, to trace their glorious foot steps after them; That day likewise we are to ascend in mind to the particular actions of their liues, considering the ardent charity of this one, this others profound humility, and the like according as their liues shal giue occasion.

In conclusion, this aduertisement I wil giue, out of that holy
Cardinal

Cardinal Bellarmine touching these exteriour reuerēces, to wit, that they are only to be distinguished (whether don in the honour of Alm. God, of his B. Mother, of Angels, or of Saints) by the internal intētion of the mind, and the merit and excellency of those they are directed to. As for example, we adore and reuerence Alm. God for the immensenes of his grates and Maisty, for his infinit goodnes, and for being both our beginning and final end. We honour the Saints, as those who participat of his diuine grace and celestial glory; and the B. Virgin, as Mother of Alm. God, and surpassing in excellency of title, al Creatures both, in heauen and earth. Conformable to this, we see in holy scripture,
how

and serue the B.V. Mary. 433
how Abraham with the same sort
of veneration, bowed downe
both to God, Angels, and men,
indifferently honouring them
accórding to their dignities; and
in this manner we are to vnder-
stand the holy Scripture when it
occurs to speake in any other
passage of these venerations.

*How these genuflexions may
deuoutly be exercised before
any Image of our B. Lady.*

CHAP. XV.



T is an ancient Cu-
stome of the Church,
to honour Images
both of our Sauour,
his B. Mother, and
his holy Saints, nay an article of
T faith

faith from Apostolical Tradition receiued, as we are taught by diuers Concels. This only is to be noted, that while we honour them, we direct not our reuerences vnto them, as they are materially what they are of wood or stone, &c. but as they represent them whose Images they are; it represents according to that ancient axiome; *the honour of the Image is referred to those whom it represents.* And this the Council of Trent inferrs where it sayes: *In the Images, which we honour and fall downe before, we adore Iesus Christ, and reuerence his Saints.* And so the 7. Synod sayes; *Who adore the Images, adores the soueraigne king it represents: the like we may say by the Image of the Queene of heauen; and it is confirmed by*
Origen

and serue the B.V. Mary. 435

Origen where he sayes : *Who beholds any mans Image , (sayes he) may be said to behold him whom it represents.*

This verity then so Catholike, for the better performing this holy exercise we should do wel to procure som Picture both deuout and faire, before which we are to do our reuerences (although of this there be no necessity;) I say faire, for faire objects do soonest stirr vp the affections of the mind; as appeares by that example of S. Bernardine, who while he was but very yong, was so taken with deuotion to a certaine picture of our B. Lady, more comly then the rest, that he was neuer wel but when he was on his knees before it; and heer it was where he layd the foundation of his sanctity,

T 2 which

which afterwards he built so high vpon, as it was an admiration to the world.

Which manner of adoring the B. Virgin in her Images, is a forcible remedy against the temptations of our infernal Enemy; as this following example doth declare, taken out of S. Iohn Damascen by F. Suarez of the Society of Iesus. There was a deuout Religious man (sayes he) accustomed to worship the Mother of God in a certaine Image of hers; who being one day fiercely assailed by the Enemy, with a greuous temptation, as he was carefully imploying al his force for the repelling it, the diuel appearing to him promised him, if he would forbear to honour that Image, he would not only free him

and serue the B.V. Mary. 437

him from that present temptation, but neuer molest him with the like againe. But the good Religious man in defiance of him, fel a fresh to honour it before his face, and the diuel and temptation both vanished away.

And a great help it would be to this deuotion, to imagine the B. Virgin the while beholding vs from heauen (as without al doubt she doth) & taking complacence in our honouring her; & to make the Imagination worke the liuelier, let vs frame a conceipt, that if an earthly Queene should take such delight in being honoured in picture, as she should place her selfe where she might behold with what alacrity and affection it were done, and bountiously reward those whom she sawe most

T 3 for-

forward in their honouring it; what concourse would there be by al who desired to ingratiate themselves, and indeare their seruices to her Maiesty: and if this for an earthly Queene would be don with such forward & greedy desire, how much more prompt and ready ought we to be, to doe it to please & gratify the Queen of heauen? which while we doe, deuoutly, we may suppose her gratioufly regarding vs, and taking notice of each particular action, pointing vs out to the Angels about her, thus such one doth, and thus such a one, therefore haue a particular care of them to defend them from their enemies, and when their soules are free from their mortal prisons, be careful to conduct them higher vnto

and serue the B. V. Mary. 439
vnto me. Which is cōfirmed from
this ensuing example recounted
by F. Razzi a Dominican, in his
Hortulus, of a certaine Shepheards
daughter exceedingly deuoted to
the Queen of Heauen, in so much
as seing her picture in an old rui-
nous Chappel (one day while she
was tending her fathers sheepe)
and much greening to see it so ne-
glected, she sayd : O B. Virgin,
were it in my power, this your
Image should be in greater vene-
ration; but what it wants in exte-
riour ornament, I desire my in-
terieur deuotion may supply;
which desire of hers was so grate-
ful to the Queene of Heauen, as
minding to reward her for it and
her innocent life with an euerla-
sting crowne of glory, she sent
her first a sicknes the fore-run-

ner of her death; and iust as that
was ready to approach vnto her.
Two deuout Religious men, the
one in vision, the other in prayer,
had eyther of them this reuelation.
Concerning her; they first
saw a Proceſſion of Virgins richly
habited, al shining with glorious
light; which paſſing by them,
another troupe followed them
more riche and glorious then the
former, al clothed in white, and
laſtly a third whose garmēts being
red, in ornament and beauty farr
ſurpaſſed and out-shined al thoſe
that went before; in the cloſing of
this laſt trayne, a Queene of incomparable
Maiesty appeared, infinitely exceeding
al that can be imagined of venerable
and amiable; at the feete of whom thoſe
Religious men proſtrating them-
ſelues,

& serue the B.V. Mary. 441

selues, desirous of her to be informed who she was, she thus answered them: I am the Mother of God, and al those troupes, you see marching before, are those who haue conseru'd their virginities al their life time; the first troupe, not fully resolved of their course of life, haue yet died Virgins, and receiued the reward thereof, the second is of those, who haue consecrated their virginities by vow vnto their heauenly Spouse; and the last, who to the Crowne of virginity haue added the glorious palme of Martyrdome; al which are now attending me to a hamlet heere to receiue the departing soule of a poore shepardesse; whom for her deuotion to me in mine Image, I meane to place amongst these heauenly Quires,

T v and

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and reward her with the glory of an euerlasting Crowne. This Reuelation (it hapened) these two Religious men cōmunicated each to the other, when inquiring who this poore Shepardeffe should be, at last they were directed to a litle cotage where lay this poore yong Girle vpon a padd of straw, euen ready to breathe her last, When seeing these Religious men entering in; Good Fathers (sayd she) in reward of your charity I would to God I could shew you what a glorious Company is heer awayting to beare my soule to rest; & hauing sayd this, she rendred vp her soule into their hands, who willingly receaued it. By which example we may see, how acceptable to the B. Virgin are our reuerencing her deuoutly in her Images.

Now

& serue the B. V. Mary. 443

Now to the end the frequent aspect of her Images may excite vs frequently to honour her; I would counsel euery deuout Catholicke to adorne their chambers with some Image of hers, or procure rather to haue some portable one, which they are neuer to depart withal; In imitation of S. Heduing a Dutchesse of Polonia, who to honour the glorious Mother of God more frequently, would neuer be without her Image in her hand; the two first fingers & thumbe of whose right hand at the opening of her Tomb some five and twenty yeares after her decease were found whole & incorrupt, (althe rest of her body being wasted vnto to bone) holding betwixt them an Image of the B. Virgin so fast, as neither
when

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when she dyed, nor then, could they take it thence.

So when in any place her sacred Image occurs vnto our sight, we are deuoutly to honour it, in vncovering the head, bowing the knee, &c. According as the ancient Chrestians were accustomed: the like reuerence we are to do when we heare her name pronouced; a deuotion so punctually obserued by the ancient Christians, & Saints as S. Gerard Bishop of Pannonia commanded it through al his Diocese.

And that which we sayd of reuerencing her name, inuites me likewise to say a word or two of the reuerence we owe to that of our Sauour Christ. First, for the name of the holy Trinity how venerable it is in the holy Church, witness

and serue the B.V. Mary. 445

witnesse that verse in the conclusion of euery Psalme : *Gloria Patri, &c. Glory to the Father, &c.* in pronouncing of which, al rise vp and do reuerence, not only the Quires on earth, but also in heauen it-selfe; as is manifest by that wondrous example recounted by Petrus Damianus. There was a deuout man (sayes he) who one night, while they were singing Matins, rauished in extasy, beheld the B. Virgin accompanied with an infinity of Angels & Virgins entring the Church, and leading the Procession vp the high Altar, he saw thē al kneele down, and whilest each *Gloria Patri, &c.* was singing, they al fell prostrat on their face; who demanding the reason of his extraordinary reuerence, it was answered him, that

that as often as that verse was sung on earth, they in heauen were particularly touched with the reuerence exhibited vnto the holy Trinity, and reioyced that their ordinary exercise in heauen of adoring the Al Blessed Trinity, was in such vogue on earth.

And how seuerely any irreuerence vnto this sacred verse, is punished by Alm. God, we haue a cleare Example in the secōd part of the Fr. Minors Chronicles, of a Religious man, who for not inclining while this verse was pronounc't out of a negligent custome he had gott, was after death punished in this manner; she was punished placed on a most highe and narrow pillar, inuiro-
ned about with sea, where a hundred tymes a day and as oft by
night,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 447

night, he was condemned, to most profound inclination vntil he had satisfied for his neglect of them, in the other world. Which punishment being expired, he reuealed vnto one of his fellow Religious, that at euery inclination he felt such a horrible feare, as if at the instant he had ben falling into hel.

As for the B. name of Iesus, there needs no other testimony, nor incitement to honour it, then those words of holy Scripture where it is sayd: *That at the name of Iesus, al knees should bow both in heauen, Earth, and the Infernal deepes below.* So likewise do we reuerēce those words of S. Iohns Gospel *Et Verbum Caro factum est: and the worde was made flesh:* and that other particule of the Nicen Creed: *Et incarnatus*

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carnatus est, &c. by which we are reduced to memory of the sweet goodnes of Alm. God, and his infinit loue; which caused him for our sakes to vndergo so many tormēts, & afflictions in this mortal life; and that man were a very monster of Ingratitud, should he refuse to honour him for it.

Admirable truely and worthy the notice of al the world is that history which Cefarius an author worthy of credit recounts. There was (sayes he) a yong Gentleman of a proud and hauty nature, who being present once at Masse sung in the Cathedral Church, whilst al at pronouncing these words, *Incarnatus est*, &c. bowed downe their knees in humble reuerence, he neuer offered to stirr or moue him from his seate;
In

and serue the B.V. Mary. 449

In punishment of which irreuerence, it pleased Alm. God to permit the diuel presently to appeare vnto him in a most horrible and frightful shape, who giuing him a furious blow on the face, sayd vnto him; Poore impious man, dost thou not know that the Eternal God became man for thee? and art thou not ashamed then to Sitt while others kneele, & beare thy selfe so high, for whom God stoop't so lowe? and what art thou more then others or what priuiledge hast thou aboue the rest? vngrateful as thou art; if he whom thou neglect'st so much, had done but a hundred part so much, for me, as he hath done for thee, I would not only bow downe vnto the earth vnto him, but euen vnto
hel

430. *A Method to loue
gel it selfe.*

For the honour which apper-
taines to Images, hauing by the
way spoken of it before, I wil
heer omit it, and passe vnto.

*The Reuerences We are to
make in saying our Beads.*

C H A P. XVI.



HAVING spoken of
diuers sorts of Ado-
rations, that which
we intend to speak of
now, humbly to in-
cline our selues at euery *Aue Ma-*
ria in saying of our Beads, of al
others is the most excellent,
we may gather from the excel-
lency

& serue the B. V. Mary. 451
lency it selfe of Rosary and the
Angelical salutation.

And first for the Beads or Rosary, its excellency Consists in this, that it is a deuotion wholly composed of our Lords Prayer & the Archangels wordes, with and addition of Saint Elizabeths, out of the holy Ghospel, &c. vnto which the holy Church hath no deuotion comparable. Then for the number, it consisting of. 63. *Aue Marias*, being the number of yeares the B. Virgin liued on earth, it is both deuout and mysterious; wherefore it were good, that in saying ouer the Beads, we inclined at euery *Aue Maria* in memory of each yeare of her B. life, and each vertue in which she was exercised the while; which if it be duely
per-

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performed, what an excellent deuotion must it necessarily bee, whilst we commemorat, how she liued an infant, how in womans state, and how al her life in euery age thereof, according to the seueral decades of our Beads' vpon euery one, whilst we make deuout and humbler euerence me thinkes we exceed in deuotion, euen the Angel whom we imitat, for he only once saluted her, but we as often as there are Beads in the Rosary, and as oft as we shal say them ouer.

And whilst we are exercised in this deuotion, what do we else but compose a Garland for our selues of the Roses and lillyes of immortal life, with which after this mortal life we shalbe Crowned, or rather she doth it for vs, to whom

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whom we offer vp this our deuotion; as whilst a certaine deuout Virgin saye her Beads, an Angel was obserued on a goulden thread for each *Aue Maria* to thread a Rose, for each *Pater noster* a lilly, which the following Miracle giues worthy credit vnto, taken out of the third part of the Fr. Minors Chronicles, and it is this: A certaine Guardian had commanded a Nouice of his called Lewis Albanois, to say euery day his Beads ouer before he eate or drunke. This deuotion the good Nouice once by chance (hindred by other busines) did omitt, which the Guardian vnderstanding instantly commanded him to performe, it (iust when they were then sitting downe to eate,) seuearely reprehending him for his
negli-

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negligence, the Nouice obeyed, and repayred vnto the Church, where after he had for some good space remained, the Guardian sent one of the Religious to seeke him out: who going, found the Nouice on his knees before the highe Altar deuoutly saying his Beads, and saw an Angel clofe by him threading of roses and lilyes on a golden thread) as we haue sayd before): wherupon he remaining astonished at the thing the Guardian dispatch't another in search of him, who hauing found him out, ioyn'd with him in astonishment at so rare a spectacle; In fine, one in traine of another, being sent, and none returning thence, the Guardian at last with the rest arose, and al repaying to the Church, were al
wit-

& serue the B. V. Mary. 455

witnesses of the Miracle; In testimony of which, after the Angel disappeared, (which was not til the Nouice had finished his take) the place remaind', for a long while as freshly fauouring of roses and lillyes, as if they had growne there.

For diuers reasons is this deuotio of the Beads to be exceedingly esteem'd, First for that the Angelical salutation consists of words inuented first in the consistory of the sacred Trinity, and afterwards pronounced by the Archangel Gabriel one of the chieft in heauen; for which reason *Albertus magnus* sayes on these words *Misus est*, &c. that the Angel saluted the B. Virgin with these words *Aue gratia plena: haile ful of grace*; not in his person, but
of

of the B. Trinity, Secondly, because they are words pronounced first by one of the highest Seraphins, according to S. Gregory the great and diuers others; and certainly there was a congruency in it he should be one of the highest in the Court of heauen, who should be employed from Alm. God in a busines of the highest Consequence on earth.

Thirdly, by reason of the objects dignity, which is the B. Virgin, whose soueraine greatnes and perfections are farr transcending al other Saints.

Fourthly, because of the magnificence and respectful manner this heauenly Embassage was deliuered her by the Angel Gabriel, who accompanied with multitudes of Angels apparailled
in

and serue the B.V. Mary. 457

in a white vestment sett of with shining beames of light, with countenance full of cheere and humble demeanour saluted the B. Virgin with the glorious titles of full of grace, & our Lord being with her, *Aue gratia plena, Dominus tecum*: &c. so as with good reason the holy Scripture sayes, she was troubled at the aspect of so great Maiesty and magnificence, and especially at so vnaccustomed a salutation, attributing so much honour to her, and dignity; for (as Lyra wel obserues) it was that, and not the Angels presence she was so amazed at, for they had often been present with her before; but *Aue gratia plena, Dominus tecum*, she had neuer heard before; and so the scripture sayes, she stood musing at

V

that

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that salutation , comparing the dignity of it with her owne vnworthines (as she imagined) and that high fauour with her low estate. The excellency finally of this Angelical Salutation consists likewise in this , that it containes al the vertues , graces prerogatiues , dignities, and greatneses , which God hath aduantaged his Blessed Mother with al, it comprehending the highest and deepest mysteries of our redemption , and there shining brightly in it the infinit loue and immense goodnes of the soueraigne wisdom and incomprehensible omnipotency , of God. Which being so, with how much deuotion and reuerence ought the deuout seruant, of the B. Virgin to pronounce it , and how high

and serue the B.V. Mary. 459

high esteeme are they to conceiue the whilst of so mysterious a prayer? what sweet resentments and gusts of Ioy are they to conceiue, while they pronounce these words so full of sweetnes and consolation? But what should I speake of the dignity thereof, of which the Angels can neuer speake enough.

Those then, who would deuoutly indeed performe this exercise, are before they begin their Beads, to imagin the B. Virgin seated in a highe Maiestik throne invironed about with innumerable Angels and Saints, honouring and reuerencing her; which Imagination being framed (as soone as we haue been speaking it) they are to begin their beads, making at each a profound reue-

rence in bowing either the head or knee, and let the meditation of their heart accompany their words of the high titles of honour and dignity attributed vnto her therein; and although they reach not fully the sense of the words, yet it wil suffice that they keepe the eyes of their Imagination fixt vpon the B. Virgin imagining they speake in person to her; which wil much auayle to stirr vp in them, a liuely deuotion; and this is the aduise which Nauarr giues vs in his Commentaries, to recite with attention the *Pater noster*, and *Aue Maria*.

Besides we must obserue, that we are to make our reuerence at pronouncing of these words *Aue Maria*, &c. natural reason teaching vs that in pronouncing of
the

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the name of those we honour, & giuing them *Al hayle*, we are to make the greatest demonstration of Reuerence. And how grateful vnto the B. Virgin this deuotion is, if deuoutly indeed performed, and how it Crownes her as it were with celestial honour; we may learne from this Example recounted by the B. Bernardin of Felthe at Verona in publik Sermon. There was (says he) a deuout Religious man, who one day saying his beads before the high Altar of the Church, another who secretly obserued it beheld the Angels at euery *Aue Maria* he sayd crowning the B. Virgin with a crown of sparkling diamonds, which action they iterated at euery bead which he let fal, whilst others presented her

V 3 the

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the whils with feuerall flowers of lillyes roses and the like. Which deuout vision ought to be al of great consolation to those who are piously exercised in this deuotion.

*Remarkable Instructiōs how
to say the beads, extracted
out of the second Tome of
Nauarrs Commentaries,
and other Authours.*

C H A P. XVII.



HE aduise of this great Doctour is, to deuide the Beads or Rosary, and say them at feuerall tymes (euen those we are to say of obligation)

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gation) now one or two decads,
and as many another tyme, more
or lesse as our commodity shal
serue; so as there passe no houre
of the day that may not haue part
of our deuotions; and he instan-
ces in the Canonical Houres, al
which although they integrat one
Office, yet the Church deuides
them into feueral houres, and as-
signes feueral parts of the day for
the reciting them; so says he, al-
though the Rosary be but one
prayer, as it were, yet may it be
deuided into feueral parts to be
sayd at feueral tymes.

And what on excellent com-
modity is this, for al sorts of per-
sons, euen in the midst of the
presse of their affaires, to be able
to comply with their deuotions,
to her, who of al other creatures

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can best proper them; the merchant or citizen may say his beads, one part as he goes in the streets, the other at his rerurning home, the lawryer in going to the Hal, the Courtier to the Court, without any danger of distraction, or interruption of their deuotions on the way; the Sodalists of our Lady whilst the Sodality is assembling, the deuout persons whilst they await the beginning of a Masse, or retorne homewards after it is done.

And by this deuotion of the Rosary, or any other particular prayer, the pious Catholike reapes a world of good: For first he often entertaines discourse with Alm. God and his B. Mother, by their seuerall prayers, and that in a manner most succinct & breife; which

and serue the B.V. Mary. 465

which is the best, if as the saying is; *short prayers do soonest penetrat the heauens*; For which reason S. Chrysostome in one of this Homilies, counsels the people of Antioch, rather to the exercise of Iaculatory prayers, that is shorth and often repeated, then to seldome and long prayers, for this (sayes he) soonest begets tediousnes; and he confirmes it from the doctrine of S. Paul, and of our B. Sauour himselfe; and this (according to Cassian) was much in vse with the ancient Fathers of the Desart. The second good which we reape from it is, that the more shorth and breefe it is, with the more seruour and attention it is said; for we see by daily experience that when we haue much to recite, we make more hast with it, then

V v when

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when we haue but litle; which haste takes much away from our seruour and attention.

The third Good is, that it puts vs more often in memory of the B. Virgin, and consequently awakes our loue of her, more often too.

And lastly, it actuats vs more frequently in these Adorations and Reuerences of our soueraine Queene & Empreffe of Heauen.

Now if by busines any one be hindered from saying their whole Rosary in a day, they may do it in a weeke (in this manner) saying each day a feuerall decad of it, &c. which is so facile and easy to performe, as none in reason can excuse themselves from it.

How

*How alternatim, or by
turnes, we may say our
Beads.*



His learned person
also teaches vs, how
in māner of Quire,
we are likewile to
say our beads, one
answering the other; which Res-
ponsory Custome was very fre-
quent in the Primitiue Church,
and we read in the Ecclesiastical
History of S. Ignatius the Martyr
who liued in the Apostles time,
that he rauish't one day in extasy,
beheld two Quires before the
Throne of God, one answering
the other in this manner; and so
the

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the ancient Hymne of Angels
sayes : *Alternantes concrepando ,
melos damus vocibus* : which con-
firmes the receiued opinion to
bee, that the Angels in that man-
ner sing in magnifying God and
his B. Mother , whom men to
their no smal ioy and comfort
ought to imitat.

The manner then to say the
Beads alternatly, or by turnes, is
this ; Two , or more , are with
their beads in hand to say a *Pater
noster* first vnto themselues , and
then with an audible voyce recite
the *Aue Maria gratia plena , Domi-
nus tecum* ; the other answers ; *be-
nedicta tu in mulieribus , et benedi-
ctus fructus ventris tui Iesus* ; when
the first resumes agayne , or both
may ioyne together and say : *San-
cta Maria &c.* and so forth vnto
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 469
the end. And this may be done
eyther walking in the feilds, or
visiting the stations in the streets,
or the maisters or mistresses of
families convocating them toge-
ther may distribut the in Quires,
& do it with much profit & deu-
otion; which if it be done with
due attention, it is impossible to
imagine how grateful it wil be vn-
to the Queen of heauen. To con-
clude this Chapter then, I wil on-
ly recount a certaine Miracle in
confirmation thereof.

What tyme the B. Brother Ber-
nardin of Felthe preached at Pa-
uy, a certaine noble Matron had
this deuotion to teach al her chil-
dren daily before they went to
schoole, to say their beads before
a certaine Image of the Queene
of heauen which she had in her
Cham-

Chamber; now it happened that one of the least of them, one day fel into the Riuer in passing ouer a bridge; of which accident the Mother being aduertised, she presently casting her self vpon her knees before the Image of our Lady in lifting vp her eyes to heauen, al bedeawed with teares; O mother of God, sayd she the, vsual hope of the afflicted, if it be your blessed wil, saue my poore child, if not, your B. wil be done; and concluding with the Angelical salutation deuoutly sayd; she ran to the place where many people were assembled to saue the child, and was no sooner arriued at the bridge, but behold she saw her child floting vpon the water and calling her by her name; at which much reioicing she cried out, take strong

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strong cheere my child, cal vpon
the B. Virgin, and my life for
yours; when presently the child
was taken vp safe, and brought
vnto its mother, when embra-
cing it; the child, said vnto her its
is not to men I owe my deliurāce,
but to our B. Lady, before whose
Image you so often instructed me
to pray; and therupon it recount-
ed vnto her, how being falne in,
she had receiued it in her armes,
and bore it aboue the waters; At
this, al the Assembly moued to
deuotion towards the B. Virgin,
did render praise and thanks to
Alm. God, and his B. Mother, for
being so fauourable and succou-
rable to those who deuoutly in-
uoke her in their necessities.

of

Of the most excellent deuotion of the Rosary.

CHAP. XVIII.



THOSE who are diligent in seruing of great Princes, are stil inuenting some new way of honouring them; and so we Christians being seruants of Alm. God and of his B. Mother, are to do the like. Now amongst al the Inuentions of which deuotion hath ben most fertil, none hath been comparable to the Inuention of the Rosary.

And to say nothing of the
name

and serue the B. V. Mary. 479

name, or whether it were so called to signifie, that as the Rose holdes the first ranke amongst all flowers so the Rosary amongst all deuotions; or that the contexture of it seemes to be as a Garland of roses, for to crowne the head of her whom we honour in it. Finally there is none more vniuersally exercised then this deuotion of the Rosary, whose Invention the whole Christian world owes to that great Patriarke S. Dominike; as the propagation thereof vnto the Religious of this Order, who take care to celebrate it euery where on earth.

Neither is it celebrated on earth alone, but the very Angels in heauen do exercise it too, as is confirmed by this vision, recorded by two graue & learned Authors.

Lansper-

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Lanspergius the Carthusian, and Blofius the famous Abbot in his spiritual Mirrour, as followeth: The Prior of the Carthusians at Treuers a very holy man, and one much exercised in this deuotion of the Rosary, one day rauished in vision, (as he was frequently) beheld the glorious Cittizens of heauen, praising and blessing with ineffable ioy our Lord Iesus-Christ and his B. Mother by commemorating the mysteries of the Rosary, and recommendation of al those who deuoutly exercised it heere on earth; besides he obserued that singing in their praise as often as they repeated the glorious names of *Iesus* and *Maria*, they made humble obeissance to it; and lastly it was reuealed to him that those who deuoutly exercised

exerci-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 475

xercised this deuotion on earth, should obtaine by our Ladyes intercession a plenary Indulgence of al their faults, with diuers priuiledges in this life, and more then can be imagined in the next. From whence we may gather the excellency of the Rosary, & how acceptable it is to our Lord and Sauour Christ, to his B. Mother, & al the Court of Heauen. Wherefore we are to endeauour to performe it with al due reuerence & attention, if we desire to be grateful vnto them, and to haue them propitious vnto vs.

The whole Rosary consists of fifteene Decads of *Aue Marias* and fifteene *Pater noster*, that is, a hundred and fiftie *Aue Marias* which admitting of a triple diuision, your beads of fise decads are.

are those, most ordinarily in vse. Now the manner of Meditating on them, the seuerall mysteries of our Sauours and B. Ladyes life, is this. On the first five decads, they vse to meditat the five Ioyful mysteries, to witt, vpon the first, the Angelical salutation; when the Eternal Word by the holy Ghosts cooperation, was conceiued: Vpon the second decad, the Visitation of S. Elizabeth: On the third, the Natiuity of our Sauour Christ: On the fourth, the Presentation in the Temple of our Sauour Christ, where holy Simeon and Anna the Prophe-tesse foretold to his glad mother his future greatnes and miracles. And on the fifth, our B. Ladyes finding her B. Sonne in the Temple disputing with the Doctors.
&c.

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&c. On the five next decads, we are to meditat the five Dolorous mysteries; The first of which is, our B. Sauours prayer in the Garden, where he fel into that bloody Agony: The second, the cruel Flagellation, or his whipping at the Pillar, til he was all goary blood: The third, the crowning him with thornes, their spitings in his face, buffeting, reuiling him, and the like: The fourth, the Carrying of the crosse on his B. shoulders to Mount Caluary, when his body so enfeebléd as before, must needes sinke often vnder the heauy waight: The fifth, his Crucifixion, or nayling vpon the Crosse, with vnspeakable cruelty, and indignity.

On the last 5. Decads we are to Meditat, first our Blessed Lord
and

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and sauiours glorious Resurrection , next his Ascension into heauen ; Thirdly the happy departure of the B. Virgin hence ; Fourthly , her Assumption into Heauen : Fiftly and lastly her glorious Coronation there , where she is declared Queene ouer the vniuersal Kingdomes of heauen and earth.

Where is to be noted , that for the obtaining of the Indulgences granted to the sodality of the Rosary (then which I do not knowe any more ample) it is not requisite to meditate al these mysteries in order as we haue sett them down ; but it may suffice to entertaine ones mind the while , with meditating any one or two of them in which we shal find the greatest deuotion , nay only to say our
beads

& serue the B. V. Mary. 479

beads ouer vocally (according to Nauarrs opinion) is sufficient, so it be don with due attention and deuotion.

Now for the more ignorant, that they may participat likewise of the fruit of deuotion, before they begin their beads I would counsel them, to frame an Imagination of the B. Virgin, in one of these three manners, as vulgarly they are accustomed to delineat her: Either with the Angel saluting her, or holding her B. Sonne betwixt her armes, or finally al glorious in heauen, ready to heare and grant our Petition; and this there is none but may make benefit of, for the stirring them vp vnto deuotion; And that learned man Nauarr when he was fower-score yeares of age, not only
made

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made vse of this Imagination in reciting of the Rosary, but also in al his other deuotions, and prayers, still Imagined the dignity of the person to whom he directed them. Which manner of stirring vpp attention is both easy, re-creatiue, and deuout, maintayning the spirit in attention and recollecting the memory the whilst, & opening a way to great familiarity with Alm. God and his B. Mother; which if (as we ought) we practise and esteeme according vnto its dignity, we shal in short time make wondrous progresse in the way of spirit, and shal heape vp in heauen riches enough to make vs happy for al eternity. There only rests, that I add to this, a most stupendious accident, by which we may see the
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 481

the great importance of this deuotion, & the great benefit those of the Confraternity of the Rosary enioy thereby, & it is extracted out of a litle booke intituled, *The Rosary of our Lady.*

At what time S. Dominik preached in the Kingdome of Aragon, a certaine yong Virgin of good account called Alexandria made instance vnto him as he came downe, from out of the Pulpit (where he had omitted nothing might make for the commendations of the Rosary) to be admitted into the Sodality thereof, which she obtained although for the rest, her life was no wayes accordingly, she being one who spent much more time in adorning her body, then to haue her soule wel adorned. Now it happened,

ned, that two Gentlemen at once making suite vnto her, it was sufficient ground of quarrel (as they in their madnes thought) one to challenge the other into the feild, where they both remayned dead vpon the place. The freinds of either hearing of this sad accident, and imagining her (as it was true) the cause to be revenged on her, they rushed into her house, and notwithstanding she desired at least, but so much respit as to confesse her selfe, they would not allow it her, but presently cutt off her head, and threw it into a pitt. But our B. Lady, who has euer a special care of her deuoted seruāts, (though neuer so defectiue) reuealed the fact vnto S. Dominick, who in order to her merciful commands, went to the pit, &
cal-

and serue the B. V. Mary. 48;
called on Alexādria by her name,
when behold (a wondrous acci-
dent) the Angels visibly in sight
of al the people, brought vp the
head from the bottom of the pit,
which ioyned vnto the body, she
besought the Saint to heare her
Confession; which being done,
she declared three things worthy
of particular note, arriued vnto
her both before and after she was
dead: The first, that by vertue of
her being of the Confraternity of
the Rosary, she had a perfect act
of Contrition at the instant of her
death, without which infallibly
she had died eternally: The se-
cond, that as soone as she was dead,
the diuels putting her to great af-
fright, she was maruelously secu-
red & comforted by the glorious
Queene of Heauen: The third,

that for Penance and satisfaction of the death of those two Gentleman, she was condemned to Purgatory for two hundred yeares, & for five hundred more, for her vanity in attire the cause of, that so lamentable effect. But that she hoped by the merits of the same Confraternity, to be soone delivered from that punishment, and hauing sayd this, after she had remained a liue two whole dayes, for the confirmation of the miracle, and to augment the deuotion of the Sodality: she left this life againe, whose body was honorably interred by the sodalists there. When fifteen dayes after, she appeared againe vnto S. Dominick al in glory clothed in resplendant beames of light, declaring vnto him after a world of thanks for
the

and serue the B.V. Mary. 485
the inestimable benefits she had
receiued of him, two things of
especial note concerning this de-
uotion of the Rosary; the one
was, that she was delegated to
him from the soules in Purgato-
ry with a Petition to be likewise
inrold in the Sodality, to receiue
the benefit of it amongst the rest;
The other, that the Angels much
reioyced at the erection of his
Sodality, and that God instiled
himselſe the Father of it, the B.
Virgin the Mother, &c. And ha-
ving sayd this, shee flew away to
heauen.

This example ought to be a
great incitement vnto euery one
to make themſelues of this Soda-
lity., and the better to become
participant thereof to recite eue-
ry weeke the whole Rosary, at

X 3 least

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least a payre of beads cannot be burthensome vnto any one of what imployment soeuer they be ; at the end of euery decad thereof they are to make a profound inclination, saying with hart and mouth : O most holy Mother of God, I adore you, and wishe the Saints and Angels may reuerence and adore you a thousand and a thousand times together, with whom I haue firme confidence through the grace of Almighty God, and your fauourable assistance, to blesse, praise, and adore you hereafter for euer and euermore,

and serue the B.V. Mary. 487

*Twelue most notable Adora-
tions to be made, in the ho-
nour & memory of twelue
dignities and priuiledges
bestowed on the B. Virgin
by Alm. God, answerable
to the twelue Starrs, which
go to the composing of a
Crowne for her most sacred
head.*

CHAP. XIX.



*HE B. Euangelist S.
Iohn in his sublimes
Reuelations of the
Apocalypse beheld a
woman of incompa-
rable beauty, euironed with Sun
X 4 beames*

beames, the Moone vnder her
feete, and on her head a crowne
of twelue brighter starrs : by
which according to the exposi-
tion of the holy Doctors and In-
terpreters, our B. Lady is vnder-
stood, by the Sun, the glory and
Maiestie which she shines withal
in heauen; by the Moone which
she treads vnder foote, is signi-
fied how al that is vnder God,
such as are sublunary and earthly
things she is Superiour too, and
for the twelue starrs which adorn
her head, are prefigured twelue
singular priuiledges and preroga-
tiues, which Alm. God hath en-
dowed her with al, aboue al the
Monarks in this world, and high-
est Angels and Seraphins in hea-
uen; and these her words haue a
relation vnto it, in that so excel-
lent

and serue the B.V. Mary. 489

lent Canticle of hers, where after she professes her soule doth magnifie our Lord, she adds the reason why, *quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est*, because he hath don great things for me (sayes shee) which, in that she specifies not what they are, we may imagine to bee aboue al expression. These then how infinit and vnspeakable they are, we shal endeauour to speake a word or two of, reducing them vnto the number of twelue, answerable to the twelue Starrs, which go to the composing of her Crowne.

*The declaration of the
first Starr.*

THE first starr, or rather prerogatiues ; which our heavenly Lady is adorned with al, is her Eternal and particular *Predestination*, who before the Creation either of heauen or earth, & before al times was diuinely elected and predestinated vnto sanctification, the plenitud of Grace, and the accumulation of al heavenly guifts, to the end that she adorned therewith, might be the better disposed to the Cōception of the Eternal Word. The holy Church makes mention of her diuine predestination in these words

& serve the B.V. Mary. 491

words of the holy Scripture attributed vnto her: *Dominus possedit me ab initio viarum suarum*: the Lord hath had the possession of me from the beginning of his wayes. And this other: *Ab initio & ante secula Creata sum*, &c. from the beginning I was created & before al times. So S. Bernard discoursing with the B. Virgin vpon this point, *You haue ben predestinated* (sayes he) *in the Spirit of God, before al creatures, to the end you should ingender God himselfe,* This then is the first starr which crownes the B. Virgin. Where we may obserue, that, what is future and to come to vs, is present, and as it were past vnto Alm. God. So S. Paul speaking of the predestination of Alm. God, speaks of things to come, as if they

they were already past : Those whom she hath predestinated (sayes he) he hath called, and iustified, and glorified. This B. Virgin then hauing euer been present to the eyes of Alm. God as the most endeared object of his loue, may wel say of her selfe ; *ab initio & ante secula creata sum* : And so at the first instant of the Angels creation amongst the Idæas which they beheld as in a Christal mirror presented vnto their eyes one of the most beautiful of all next to the humanity of our Saviour Christ, was this celestial Virgin ; when with what delight and delectation may we imagine them to haue contemplated her, and in her the mystery of her redemption, and the restauration of humane kind : Where were you (sayes

and serue the B.V. Mary. 493
(sayes the Wiseman) when the
morning starrs did prayse me,
and al the children of God ioyfully
cried out?

Hauiing been then in so parti-
cular a manner of predestination
elected before al creatures ; by
consequence in excellency she
was to excel them al, for so vn-
doubtedly being honoured with
the greatest dignity which a crea-
ture could be capable of, she like-
wise had as great grace and san-
ctity as in any Creature possibly
could bee, with al the other en-
dowments requisit, for one who
was to be Mother of Alm. God,
who in preparing her vnto that
dignity, hath heaped vpon her
more perfections, and shewed
greater proofes of his Omnipot-
ence, wisdom, and infinit good-
nes.

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nes in creating her, then in creating the whole Vniuerse besides; and so whosoever had an eye so cleare and piercing to penetrate God Alm. work in her, would admire it more then his workmanship in al other things beside, in perfectioning of whom he hath been more exact, then in whatsoever else..

The second Starr declared.

THE second Starr which adornes and imbellishes our dearest Lady is, the prerogative of her sanctification or *Conception*; in which, her most pure soule when it was vnited to her body, receiued no staine of original sinne at al, it being endowed
euen.

& serue the B.V. Mary. 495

even at that instant with more abundant grace then any celestial or terrestrial creature else, even at their greatest height of sanctity; for which it necessarily followes, that in the wombe of her holy Mother, she should haue more perfect vse of reason, then any other at the ripest yeares; by which she both knew, loued, and contemplated her God and Creator in a more perfect manner, then al the Cōgregation of Saints and Angels could together. Naturally speaking it is true indeed, as descēdant of Adam she should haue been subiect to original sinne, as also al other miseries which follow in trayne thereof, had not God with his superabundant Grace preuented her, as one whom he had chosen to be his Mother,

Mother, from al eternity, and so by an especial Ptiuiledge exempted from the common condition, which al the rest are generally borne vnto, through our first Fathers disobedience, and so it was most conuenient, if we consider the excellency and dignity of the Sonne of God, and his B. Mother; Now the manner by which was don was this.

At the same instant as Alm. God created the soule of the B. Virgin, and infused it into her body, the newly receiuing forme in S. Anne her mothers wombe, it pleased Alm. God to enriche it with his grace; so as to free it from the contagion of al sinne, which else naturally it had been infected with, in such manner as the diuel neuer had any interest in

and serue the B.V. Mary. 497

in it; but to say, in what abundance it was, not only exceeds my capacity and expression, but that of al other creatures besides. For God at that instant did not consider her, as issuing from Adam a sinner and his enemy, but as his Mother chosen out for the reparation of our sinnes, and to bruze the head and trample on the pride of the Infernal Enemy. Which being so, if (as they say) the Em-pyrean Heauen be composed of so noble a substance, and shine with so pure and rarified a light, only because it is the medium, wherein the object of Alm. God is seene; how pure and noble must the B. Virgin haue been, who was chosen to be the tabernacle, where he was to inhabite, and in which the eternal Word
was

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was to vnite himfelfe to his holy Humanity.

And what a glory is this for humane one of their owne lineage, not only thus exempte from al original and actual sinne, but also from the very instant of her natiuity, to begin to lead a life full of grace, celestial, and diuine? What a consolation is this for poore sinners, who desire to conuert them from their finnes, to haue one to ayde them, who hath so gloriously triūphed ouer them? what comfort to those who fight against them, to haue her assistāce in the fight, who formerly hath ouercome them? But yet, not only men, but Angels themselues, reioyce and glory in it, to see their Queene, and the mother of their king, graced with so rich
so.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 499
so ritch endowmēt, with so many
graces adorned, and accumulated
with so many priuiledges, al deri-
ued from this her immaculat Cō-
ception. For which reason S. Vin-
cent Ferrerius saies, that at what
instāt the B. Virgin was cōceiued,
there was vniuersal Ioy through-
out the court of Heauen.

*The declaration of the
third Starr.*

THE third Starr, or preroga-
tiue, that goes to composing
the Crowne of our B. Lady, is her
Virginal *purity*, with which shee
was endowed by the holy Ghost,
at the first instant of her Immacu-
lat Conception; and if, before her
birth shee was so pure and holy,
how pure and holy must she ne-
cessarily

cessarily haue been afterwards :
finally, so pure shee was, as S. An-
selme sayes of her, that next to
God there was not to be imagi-
ned the like; & Theodoret sayes,
shee surpast in purity al the An-
gels in heauen, treating of these
words of the Canticle; *There are*
sixtie Queenes amongst the saued sou-
les of men, (sayes he) *shee who had*
the honour to bring forth Iesus Christ,
the Virgin Mary his mother, no doubt
surmounts both the Cherubins and Se-
raphins in purity; And so holy, so
pure, was this B. Virgin stil, as
shee held that strict guard ouer
her affections, that neuer any di-
sordinat action came neere them,
neuer any vnlawful desire, or re-
pugnant to her deuoir had neuer
any accessse vnto her, finally neuer
had she cōmitted any venial sinne
as

and serue the B.V. Mary. 501

as the sacred Councel of Trent
obliges vs to beleue, seconded
by the opinion of al the most fa-
mous Doctours of the Church;
And the exceeding affection she
bore to this Angelical vertue (as
S. Anselme sayes) was it, which
made her consecrat to God her
virginity from her most tender
yeares, so as shee was the first In-
uentrix of this rare and excellent
vertue, which equals men with
Angels, and the first who by per-
petual vow hath offered vp her
virginity to God, and led the way
which so many since haue follow-
ed, so as with good reason she is
stiled *Virgo virginum*, the Virgin
of virgins; besides we must be-
leeue, a rare purity was requisit
in her, who was to be the habita-
tion of the holy Ghost, Mother
of

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of the Eternal father sonne, the light of Heauens, and mirrour of al purity and perfection. Besides, such an affectionat loue she had to this pretious flower of Virginitie; as in her tender yeares she left parents freinds and al worldly delights; to retire her selfe within the inclosure of the Temple amongst other Virgins there, where she remained til the fourteenth yeare of her age, the great fortunes which acerued vnto her by her father and mothers death, (which hapned about the eleuenth yeare thereof) not being able to diuert her from her holy resolution; meane while she refused al offers of mariage, being at marigeable estate, professing that she had consecrated her virginitie to God,
and

& serue the B. V. Mary. 503

and that she had rather suffer a thousand deaths, then once in the least thought violat her vow.

Wherupon the Priests of the Temple suspended at the strangenes and nouelty of the thing, be-tooke themselves to prayer, and consulting the diuine Oracle how they were to comport themselves in this affayre, it was reuealed vnto them, they should assemble al the men of the Image of Dauid, and he to whose lott she fel, should haue her for his wife; which, being don, (she hauing a reuelation on the other side that such was the wil of heauen) it was S. Iosephs lott to marry her, who had the happines by it to be the Foster-father of Alm. God.

The

The fourth Starr declared.

THe fourth starr, which in splendor and beauty surpasses al the rest, is her being the *Mother of Alm. God*; so great a prerogatiue (according to S. Augustin) that no mortal greatnes can equal it, and nothing can goe beyond it but God himselte, so much it hath in it of the Infinit (as S. Thomas sayes) being so neerly conioyn'd with the infinit person of the Sonne of God; and this dignity of hers it is (sayes he) that implyes in vs an obligation, to adore her with a more excellent sort of Adoration, then any other Saint.

But is it not a wondrous thing,
that

and serue the B. V. Mary. 513

that a Virgin in the closet of her wombe, should containe him whom heauen and earth and sea cannot containe, who hath appointed to the Sun and Moone, and starrs, their seuerall orders and stations; which maruayles are sufficiently exprest in these three verses: *Quem terra, pontus, æthera, &c. Cui luna, sol, & omnia, &c. Beata mater munere, &c.* Is it not a wondrous thing, the same woman should be both mother and a mayde, that one should conceiue and bring forth a child, without any detriment of her Virginitie? that she should haue a mothers fecundity ioyned with the purity of a Virgin, that she should haue a sonne both in heauen in his fathers bosome, and on earth in his mothers wombe together

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gether which sonne in heauen should be ingendred without mother, and without father on earth? These are the exclamations of the great and learned Origen on these words ; *Cum esset desponsata*, &c. O grace (sayes he) to bee admir'd! O incredible sweetnes! O Sacrament eneffable! the same is both mother and Virgin, the same both mother and seruant too, and engendred one at once both God & Man! who hath heard of such wondrous things as these: so saith Origen.

And so great and incomprehensible is this diuine mystery, as the B. Virgin her selfe, although she were most extraordinarily illuminated by the holy Ghost, yet could she not comprehend, when the Angels could it
her

and serue the B.V. Mary. 507

her how it could be, that she who was a Virgin could conceiue a child without any detriment of her virginity, as appeareth by her; *Quomodo fiet hoc, quoniam virum non cognosco?* &c. neither could the Angel too informe her how? but he remitted her to the holy Ghost; *Spiritus sanctus superueniet in vos*; for the vnderstanding of the mystery. O mystery of mysteries; & maternal dignity to be admir'd both of Angels and men, and neuer sufficiently to be vnderstood! but let vs yet proceed to delineat her prayles more vnto the life.

When God out of the ribbs of *Adam* had framed *Eue*, he waking out of his sleep, sayd to himselfe; *this now is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh; wherfore a man is*

Y 2 to

to leaue both father and mother , and ioyning himself to his wife , to become one flesh with her. Let vs apply this mystery now to our Sauour Christ and say , that in like manner the humanity of our Sauour Christ , by its vnion with God vnited humane nature so straitly with the diuinity, that the B. Virgin might as properly say of our Sauour Christ ; this is flesh of my flesh , bone of my bone, &c. seeing , as S. Augustin sayes , the flesh of Christ, was the B. Virgin flesh.

From whence S. Peter Damian inferrs , that God not only was present to her by his vnlimited being as he is vniuersally with al, nor by his grace as he is only with the Iust, but in a farr more excellent manner of Identity , in that
that

& serue the B. V. Mary. 509

that the sonne of God, is her sonne also, and (as we haue sayd) flesh of her flesh, &c. hauing taken from her the substance whereof his sacred body was composed, a dignity in her so great, as admiration must there take vp, where humane discourse layes downe, and with its tongue of silence only celebrat it.

This so streit vnion or Identity betwixt Alm. God and the B. Virgin, is by the Angelical Doctor S. Thomas styled *Parentela*, or affinity betwixt God and her, which can be sayd of no other creature liuing besydes her selfe, neither of man nor Angel, to be naturally allyed, with God like her, hauing the natural sonne of God for her sonne. In consideration of which, S. Anselme sayes;

Y 3 The

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The Eternal father had not the hart
to suffer, that his only beloued sonne,
should be only his sonne, but would
withal he should be truly the only and
natural sonne of the B. Virgin also;
and this not as of two seuerall persons
but the person of the sonne of God, was
likewise the person of the sonne of the
Virgin also; and so the contrary.
By which we see, that she was
truely the Spouse of the holy
Ghost, who wrought in her womb
the Conception of the sonne of
God; and by this she becomes
euery way allyed vnto al the
persons of the B. Trinity. To
conclude then, this dignity and
prerogatiue we say (as we haue
sayd before) is the greatest in a
creature, as can possibly be ima-
gined.

The

The declaration of the fifth Starr.

THe fifth starr brightly shining and adorning this celestial Princeſſe, is the *Illustration* of her ſpirit, by the holy Ghosts ouer-shadowing her, conformable to that which the Angel ſayed in her ſalutation: *Spiritus ſanctus ſuperueniet in te, & virtus Altiffimi obumbrabit tibi*: which diuine obumbration was then, when the Sonne of God was incarnat in her wombe, the diſpoſition to ſo miraculous a conception; and ouer-shadowing her with its diuine vertue, the better to enable her to endure thoſe celestial ardours which inflamed her breſt the while, and which doubtleſſy but

for it, had wholly consumed her, the flames of diuine loue were so vehement the while.

Neither (according to S. Augustin and S. Iohn Damascen) did the holy Ghost obumbrat her body only, but her soule likewise; which obumbration is no other then its light and grace, which was conferr'd vpon to her most abundantly, when the Sonne of God was Incarnat in her womb, at which tyme her spirit was enlightened, & the darknes of ignorance wholly expeld from thence by which diuine light was clearly reuealed vnto her the profound mystery of the Incarnation, and diuers other mystical secrets of heauen; as also the vnderstanding of the holy Scriptures, and the spirit of Prophecy was communicated

and serue the B.V. Mary. 513

nicated to her thereby, in a more ample manner then it euer was before to any other of the Prophets.

And it is the opinion of diuers Saints and learned men, as namely of S. Antonin, S. Bernard, S. Cyprian, Vrsin, and Cassal, &c. that what tyme the Sonn of God was Incarnat in the B. Virgins womb, she was often rauish't vp to the Third heauen, where she beheld the cleere vision of Alm. God, more face to face, then eyther Moses or S. Paul. And Rupertus on these words of the Canticles : *Oculi tui columbarum* : thy eyes, are the eyes of Doues, clearly sayes that *shee was rauish't vp to the third heauen, where shee beheld in a more excellent manner then S. Paul did, those secrets which it is not law-*

Y v ful

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ful for me to know. This if it were
granted to any, (as most certaine
it is, it hath) no doubt but it was
to the B. Virgin; who as farr ex-
cels al Saints and Angels, as the
Sunn in splendour and brightnes
a litle Starr. But what tongue can
worthily expresse the sacred mo-
tions of her hart, while the Sonne
of God was Incarnat in her wōb?
the light and splendour which il-
lustrated her mind and vnderstan-
ding? the fire and ardour which
embrac't her wil? the Ioy finally,
which her blessed soule possesse,
when the Word eternal taking
flesh from her, ennobled her with
the high title of his *Mother*.

What beames and rayes of
light, may we suppose, reflected
from her countenance, while the
Diuine spirit illustrated her soule,
in

and serue the B.V. Mary. 315
in whose eyes were two conti-
nual fires burning with Diuine
loue, al who beheld her, and yet
in an admirable manner quench-
ing al carnal loue the whilst; And
if Moses issuing forth from con-
uersation with an Angel, had his
face shining with such maiestick
beames, as struck an awful reue-
rence in the children of Israels
harts; what may we imagine of
the B. virgin, who was perpe-
tually accompanied with Angels,
who tooke it for honour, euer to
be seruing her.

In the meane while, her vnder-
standing was so cleerly illumi-
nated as she had perfect know-
ledge of the Creator and al his
creatures, and how much loue she
was to bestow on euery particular
thing; and so she burned in the
loue

loue of God, as she loued him not only aboue al earthly things, but aboue her very soule, aboue her life both spiritual and temporal, aboue al glory, and finally aboue al desired felicity and beatitud in heauen. So she enioyed such a tranquillity of mind, and had al her apprehensiu and concupiscible powers so wholly at her Command, that the inferiour part of her soule neuer rebeld against the superiour, but was alwayes in subiection & subordination to it. Whence it was, that she breathed forth in al places where she came, so excellent and sweet an odour of sanctity, which increased in her daily more and more, the longer she went with our B. Saviour in her wombe; which sanctity of hers we cannot better praise

and serue the B.V. Mary. 517
praise nor speake of, then by si-
lent admiration; notwithstanding
euery one is to make some refle-
xion on it in his mind, and seeke
to draw forth from thence some
spiritual profit by it.

The sixt Starr declared.

THE sixt starr of the B. Vir-
gins Crowne, & which was
one of the cheifest motiues the
Omnipotent God had to choose
her for his Spouse; Was her *pleni-
tud of diuine grace*, and of euery
vertue else. Of this there needs
no other testimony then the An-
gels words vnto her: *Haile ful of
grace, &c.* Which plenitud of grace
in her (sayes S. Augustin) was a
disposition no lesse then necessa-
ry

ry for conceiuing the Sonne of God. And although many Saints haue ben sayd to be ful of grace, and of the holy Ghost, as Zacharias and Elizabeth, with S. Iohn Baptist their sonne; the Apostles, the seauen Deacons, and many more; Yet none of them al in that plenitud as she, the word admitting a superlatiue; one B. Sauour as the fountaine of al grace deriuing it vnto others from himselfe according to their seuerall capacities now the B. Virgin being the most, capacious of al, no wonder she had more in her then al the rest. But yet it was a greater plenitud the Angel meant by saluting her so, and the greatest indeed that possibly could bee in any Creature; a plenitud which (as S. Bernard saies) deriuing

and serue the B.V. Mary 519
deriuing it felfe to others , giues
liberty to the captiue , comfort
to the afflicted , to sinners pardon ,
grace to the Iust ; to the Angels
Ioy , glory to the holy Trinity ,
and to the Eternal Word the sub-
stance of her proper flesh. Besi-
des , as S. Hierom sayes , Grace
was giuen vnto others by parcells
only , but to her , fully and in its
intire perfection , in that the ful-
nes of al was included in her ;
and consequently by this fulnes
of grace , she must be ful of al
other vertues else , which euer
yet any Saint was endowed with
al ; Nay , the holy Fathers , and in
particular S. Cyril and S. Hie-
rom say , she was not only ful of
grace , but had al other vertues ,
diuine gifts and endowments
congregated in her alone , which
in

in scattered peeces were dispersed amongst al the other Saints. *There is nothing* (sayes S. Herom) *if we consider it wel, of pure, splendious, or of vertuous, which shinnes not in the glorious Virgin most particularly.*

Now if so large a portion of vertues fel vnto her share, before she was Mother of God, how must they afterwards be augmented, when shed was indeed? assuredly, no tongue is able to expresse, how infinit & incomprehensible they were, (sayes S. Bernard) the greatnesse & perfections of God being infinit and incomprehensible, his Mothers who conceiued him in her wombe, must needs participat of the incomprehensibility & infinitnes of them also.

Besides, there was also congregated

and serue the B.V. Mary. 521

gated in her al moral vertues in greater measure then euer was in any one, nay had an Angel come to the earth inuested in humane flesh, it could not haue been more perfectly accomplished then she; for prooffe of which assertion, I wil summ vp in a catalogue those most excellent parts of hers, which are recorded to haue been in her by diuers holy men; the admirablenes & perfection of whose life, was propos'd as a paterne for virgins to imitat by S. Ambrose in these words: Neuer did she offend any (sayes he) though she had neuer so iust a cause; but she both wished and willed wel vnto euery one, and did wel them too; she was reuerent towards her superiours, and no way molestful to her equals; she shun'd al boast,
al

all her actions were conformable
to reason; and she loved all ver-
tues with her heart; she neuer
contristated her parents, and ne-
uer with freind or acquaintance
entred into contest: she disdained
not the humble, derided not the
simple, nor thought it shame to
accompany the poore; there was
no affectation in her behauour,
nor dissolution in her gate, and
her words were so tempered, as the
modesty which shined in them
and her actions sufficiently decla-
red her interiour sanctity, and in-
ward vertue & perfectiō of mind;
no otherwise then a sumptuous
Portal doth the magnificence of
the Pallace that is within. Neuer
but to the Temple did she stirr
abrode, and then neuer but accō-
panied with her father, Mother,
kinsfol-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 523

kinsfolkes, or the like : & within doores she was delighted with solitud, and imployed her thought alwayes in somewhat of good and profitable for her soule. This much S. Ambrose, who hath much more besides.

And S. Hierom describing her Heroick vertues & celestial māner of life in the Temple amongst the sacred Virgins, sayes: She alwaies endeauoured to be the first at Vigils of the night, to be best instructed in the law of God the most humble in her demeane, the most eagre in the workes of Charity, the purest in purity and most perfect in al sorts of vertues and perfections, she was assidual in prayer, & (as the Prophet sayes) meditated night and day in the law of God, she was iealous of the
honours

honours of those she conuersed with, and that without any disgust or molestation of theirs; *Deo gratias* was her answer to al salutations; and in fine, her whole life was such as for prayer, humility, modesty, solitud, silence, virginal bashfulness, and the like noble vertues of her sexe, she was a paterne and model for al to imitat.

The seauenth Starr declared.

THe seauenth Starr nothing inferior in brightnes to the rest, is her neere *Communication* of trust and secrecy with Alm. God, so as no earthly Prince was euer more confident with Secretary or chamberlaine, then he with her, nor none euer more secret and faithful then she to him. When he

and serue the B.V. Mary. 525

he was an Infant, she with incredible care and diligence attended him, made him ready and vnready, gaue him milke from her sacred breasts, and with her virginal lipps tenderly kissed him; Al which she did with such deuotion and respect, as (according to Albertus Magnus) she never layed him to rest nor tooke him vpp, but she adored him first with profound reuerence, and entred so farr on the consideration of his infinit loue, that made him doe what he did for vs, as for the most part she fel into extasy. Afterwards for the space of 30. yeares, in al times, in al occasions she was present to his necessityes, in al his trauails, miseryes, and calamities both winter and summer, in cold and heat, raine or snow,

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know, she euer willingly would accompany him; neyther was he wanting on his part to correspond vnto the dearenes of her affection communicating with her the greatest secrets of his diuinity; so as she neuer desired him to vnfold any hidden mystery as of the Trinity the Quires of Angels, the vocation of the Gentils, the vnion of the faithful with his holy Church, but he did it presently; & if he reuealed to his disciples with such candour and promptitud, the secrets of his heauēly Father *I cal you no longer seruāts but freinds* (says he) *for what I haue heard from my Father, I haue declared to you:* much more would he do to his B. Mother, we suppose; And if in frequēting of his cōpany & hearing of his doctrine only, during his
last

and serue the B.V. Mary. 527

last three yeares he could render them so learned & expert in the diuine mysteries, how much more learned & expert must she needs be, who both frequented & heard him for more then 30. yeares? whilst he reuealed vnto her those mysteries heere on earth, which the very Angels of heauen were ignorant of. As Princes then vse to ennoble those with great titles of honours and dignityes, whom they entrust with their persons and secrecies ; so not only did our Sauour heere on earth aduance the B. Virgin to eminent dignity, but much more now in heauen doth he intitle her to the highest degree of glory and excellence, not ranking her with the quires of Virgins, Cōfessours, Martyrs, Apostles, Prophets, nor Patriarks

Patriarks, but to a high sublimity
aboue them, and aboue al the
heauenly Hierarchies he hath ad-
uāced her, seating her at his owne
right hand, where she sits instaled
Queene of heauen: *The Queene is
at thy right hand,* (sayes the Pro-
phet Dauid) *adorned with al va-
rieties*; whilst al the Blessed grant
her the precedencie willingly,
and deferr it vnto her as their so-
ueraine Queen. Finally she rules
ouer the whole Vniuerse; and al
the most important affaires of the
B. Trinity, in a manner, do passe
through her hands, so as al the
heauenly Cittizens, the inhabi-
tants of the earth, the foules in
Purgatory, nay euen hel it selfe
acknowledge he power and reue-
rence her for it with al humility.

The eighth Starr declared.

THE eight starr is the high Priuiledge she had of *Contemplation* and enioyed al her life; so as from the very first instant of her sanctification in her mothers wombe, (according to Suarez) she had the vse of reason, & conuerted it to the knowledge, loue, and contemplation of Alm. God, from which nothing could diuert, her euer after ; and he confirmes it, for if this guift (sayes he) was bestowed on the Angels at their first Creation, with greater reason may we imagine it bestowed vpon the Mother of Alm. God, and Queen of them. Whilest she

Z was

was resident in the Temple with those other consecrated Virgins, she was still in highest contemplation, supplicating the diuine Maieſty with the feruorous prayer oftē interrupted with amorous sighes for the Incarnation of the Meſſias that was to come the whilst there are graue Authours who report, that the Angels daily adminiſtred her her food, ſtill entertayning her with ſome heauenly newes, or ſome diuine raptſ ſhe had during thoſe nine moneths the Incarnat Word lay couched in her ſacred wombe. Some times ſhe being wholly transported from her ſelfe, and abſorpt in God, at other times her ſoule making ſuch ſallyes forth, *per modum tranſeuntis* (according to ſome) as cleerly to behold God face to face; and no
won-

& serue the B. V. Mary. 531

wonder, she hauing so spacious a
feild for her Contemplation to
walke in euent to the third heauen,
and farther if it were possible as
her B. sonne then actually present
with her, his heavenly ffathers
delight and Mothers ioy; who
can say, or so much as imagine
her sweet transports through the
consideration of the maruaylous
excesse of that loue of his, that
had inclosed him in womb whom
the Heauens cannot containe,
and held him in the restraint of a
litle body, who in his hand held
all that is comprised in this great
vniuerse? ffor my part I am of
opinion with SS, Bernard, Bona-
uenture, and the learned Cani-
sius, that she continued whole
nights rauished in contemplation
of these diuine and wondrous my-

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steries

steries; for we may belecue, she was of a complexion and temper so excellent, as she required but litle sleepe, and during that litle time she slept, F. Suares is of opinion, that she was so inflamed with the loue of God, that she often started out of her sleepe, (as loue is a restless thing) and was transported by the force of loue to God the only obiect of her affections; and S. Bernardin affirms, that she enioyed so supernatural a contemplation, that she had the vse of it in sleepe, in a farr more excellent manner, then euer any Saint in waking had. Howsoever, whether waking or sleeping, or howsoever employed, we may wel affirme with the learned Canisius, that she neuer interrupted her meditations

and serue the B. V. Mary. 533

tations, but thad al her life was but a continual exercise of extasy and contemplation; whilst euery thing ministred matter to meditation; she read with incredible affection the holy scripture, which she vnderstood exactly wel, both by her owne cleere vnderstanding, as also by the light communicated vnto her from Alm. God; and to her meditations a great helpe was the moderatnes and temperature of her diet, which together with her solitud and silence disposed her spirit to meditation and vnion with Alm. God, with whom she was so perpetually vnited, as she rather seemed diuine then mortal. For which reason perhaps it was, that God would haue no mention made in holy Scripture,

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neither of her father nor mother;
to witt, that we might consider
her rather a celestial creature co-
ming from heauen, then a terre-
strial, borne on earth. Meane
while, the Angels, that she
might the more wholly attend to
contemplation, did dayly bring
her food; a miracle, which we
are the lesse to admire, since we
reade of S. Paul some what to the
like effect, who was one by infi-
nit degrees inferior in sanctity
and perfection vnto her.

And what wonder is it, that
she should seeme more diuine
then humane, when she was ar-
riued to such a high degree of in-
nocencye, that she neuer sett into
the least defect, nor was euer
transported so much as with the
first motion of any disordination;
which.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 535

which were no wonder, if (as
a graue Authour affirmes) she
were borne impeccable, a qua-
lity, sayes he, but, in a manner,
necessary for her, who was desti-
nat to the high honour of being
the Mother of Alm. God. Neither
was it possible for her to be other
wise, considering how Alm. God
tooke vpp al the lodging with in
her for himselfe; while she con-
sidering her owne humility on
the one side, and the high honour
on the other, to which God had
aduanced her, was so studious how
to comply with her obligation to
him for so great a benefitt, as her
thoughts had neuer leasure to
thinke of any thing besides; To
say nothing of the absolut mortifi-
cation of her body and exterior
senses, and the continual watch

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the Angels kept ouer her by turnes, that no euil should approch her, as one who was the liuing Tabernacle of the liuing God. As for the diuels, they fled her more then they follow others, as we may wel imagine if S. Antony, S. Bernard, and other Saints were so formidable to them as they durst not approche their sight; And for her, she fled synne more then any wicked person followed it, as knowing that whosoever sinned, *ipso facto* felt into the disgrace of Alm. God, a thing which of al other she dreaded most so as al her delight was in the exercise of vertue and sanctity of life. To conclude, she despised al honours of the world, as knowing she was shortly to go to the possession of that supreme honour of being
Queene.

& serve the B.V. Mary. 537

Queene of Heauen hauing nothing then to diuert her from it; and al helps and incitements to it, how could she choose but be perpetually in contemplation?

*The Declaration of the
Ninth Starr.*

THe Ninth Starr of our B. Ladyes crowne, is the *Dignity* she is exalted to, aboue al creatures both in Heauen and earth, which by proper name, we may cal her *Exaltation*; since by it she is exalted aboue the highest heauens, aboue al the Orders of Saints, and Hierarchies of Angels, as the holy Church sings of her prayse: *Exaltata es sancta*

Z v Dei

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Dei genitrix super choros Angelorum ad Cælestia regna. Neither can we admire, that next vnto himself, the soueraine king of glory should aduance her to the greatest he had, for she being his Mother there was a kind of obligation on his part to honour her and do her al good he could, since the honour which Children are bound to giue to their parents, Consists not only in words and ceremonious respect, but much more in effect and really doing for them. Wherefore (sayes Hippolytus) he who hath commanded this: *Honora patrem & matrem*: honour thy father and thy mother, to fulfil the law which he himselfe prescribes to others, would not (we must suppose.) be wanting to his Mother, in
what

and serue the B.V. Mary. 539

foeuer honour grace and glory he could bestow vpon her. Now al the priuiledges and aduantages aboue others which the B. virgin hath, are founded vpon these two principalls; the first, the infinit power of her B. sonn; in consideration of which S. Augustin speaking of her Assumption both in soule and body. sayes, that God could do it and why he did it not, those who denied it were to giue him a reason for it, The like argument we may vse in point of the B. Virgins glory,

The seconc is her dignity in being the *Mother of God*, who is infinit, wherefore as the title of *Sonn of God* is the foundation on which we ground the excellency of the humanity of Christ; so the title of *Mother of God*, is that, on
which

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which we ground al her prerogatives, her singular graces, and her supreme glory; for natural reason teacheth vs that the mother is more nigh to her sonne, (excepting the Father) then any other kynn. Wherefore the B. Virgin being the Mother of Iesus Christ, who was Incarnat in her sacred flesh, must needs be nigher her sonne, in grace and glory, too, then any else besids.

Soe he would not ranke her amongst the Hierarchies of Angels, for then there had been others higher aduanced then she amongst the Powers and Thrones; nor amongst them, because the Cherubins and Seraphins surpast them in dignity; but next vnto himselfe, as was most fitt, that his Mother might not
be

and serue the B.V. Mary. §41

be inferiour vnto his seruants, nor the Queene vnto her subjects, where she sits enthroned with incredible pompe and Maiesty, making a Hierarchie more high and excellent by her selfe, then any of them al.

But what vnderstanding can comprehend, or what tongue expresse the Glory she is possessed of? For if the eye hath neuer seen, the eare neuer heard, nor the hart of man euer conceiued, what God Alm. hath prepared for those who loue him; how can one conceiue, what he hath prepared for her, who not only loued him, but brought him forth, nourished, educated, and serued him with such affection & diligence? Only this we may imagine and say of it, that glory and felicity next to Alm.

Alm. Gods, is the greatest that is in heauen, and that in comparison of creatures she is holy aboue al holyes, happy aboue the happiest, hath more grace then those who haue most besides, and hath more glory then the most glorious.

The holy Doctors speake mar-
vayles of this Exaltation of hers,
and amongst the rest, S. Bernard
sayes, that the glory she enioyes
in heauen, beares a proportion
to the plenitud of grace she had
on earth aboue al creatures els;
and adds, that as on earth there
was not a more sanctified place
then the sacred Temple of the
Virgins wombe, which contain-
ed God himselfe, so in heauen
there is not a more glorious then
her Throne, where she sits exal-
ted.

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ted at the right hand of God: In another place he sayes, the vnderstanding of man cannot conceiue her glory, nor his tongue declare it, which puts the Inhabitants of heauen it selfe to their admiration in beholding it. Andræas Cretensis sayes, that her glory can not be comprehended, for that it exceeds the glory of al the Saints and Angels putt together. S. Iohn Damascen, that there is a mighty difference betwixt the seruants and the Mother of God. S. Iohn Chrysostom, that the B. Virgin is more glorious incomparably then the Seraphins. B. Laurentius Iustinianus, that al the glory and felicity which is scattered peeces is distributed amongst the Saints, is found vnited in the B. Virgin And the Sera-

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Seraphike S. Bonauenture sayes,
that the greatnes and goodnes of
God doth more manifestly ap-
peare in the B. Virgin only, then
in al the rest of creatures, and that
al their perfections are in a more
excellent manner to be found in
her then them; and he concludes,
that as in grace and merits she
surpasseth al other Saints, so like-
wise doth she in felicity and
glory. This and much to this ef-
fect is sayd by them of the B. Vir-
gins high exaltation answerable
to the height of her other merits
and prerogatiues, who being Mo-
ther of God, the supremest di-
gnity which any creature could be
aduanced vnto, on earth. Corres-
pondent to it is this ninth Starr,
and one of the brightest in her
glorious Crowne of being ad-
uanc't

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uanc't to so supreme a dignity in
heauen.

The tenth Starr declared.

THe tenth, and that a most
resplendant one, is the Em-
pire and soueraigne command she
hath ouer the whole Vniuerse, al
creatures both in heauen & earth
and in the deapes below, ack-
nowledging her superiority in
reuerencing her for it, and ado-
ring her; there being a congru-
ency, sayes S. Iohn Damascen,
that the mother should partake of
the sonnes dignity; And since
he (says S. Athanasius) who was
borne of her, is King and soue-
raine Lord of al, consequently
she who bore him, is to beheld
for

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for foueraigne Lady and Queene;
 fo says S. Bernard; who can deny
 her a legitimat claime to be Lady
 ouer al, of which her sonne is
 Lord. Let vs then acknowledge
 her authority ouer al, to be as
 great and vnlimited as her wil.
 In consideraton of whose great-
 nes S. Bernard breakes forth into
 this exclamation: *Al power, O so-
 ueraigne Lady, in heauen and earth,
 is giuen you to do what you wil with-
 al.* S. Brigitt in one of her Reue-
 lations sayes, that at the instant
 of her solempne entry into heauen,
 God aduanc't her aboue al the
 heauens, gaue her the Empire of
 al the Vniuerse, and constituted
 her Lady and Mistres of the An-
 gels; and she confirms it in these
 wordes dictated vnto her by the
 holy Ghost: *The principality of al
 people*

and serue the B.V. Mary. 547

*people and nations she had (says she)
and by her vertue she treads vpon the
harts of the Proudest and highest there.
And truely a wonderful dignity it
is, which equals her (in a manner)
with the Lord of al; but a more
wonderful and stupendious it is,
that she should haue an authority
euen ouer him; which that it may
seeme lesse strange vnto the eares
of flesh and bloud, let vs remem-
ber only, that she is his Mother
and our admiration wil cease, for
that filial obedience he owed her
heere on earth, he stands not so
quitt of in heauen, but it induces
a kind of obligation in him to
grant her whatsoeuer she desires;
whom there we may Imagine
speaking vnto her thus: Demand
of me, deare Mother, whatsoeuer you
please, it is not lawfull for me to turne
away my face.*

This.

This our triumphant Empresse,
to expresse vnto vs more vnto the
life the greatnes of her dignity,
declares vnto vs in these remar-
kable words fower things: *I alone
haue incircled the round of heauen,
and haue penetrated the depth of the
Abisse, and haue walked on the waues
of the sea, and haue the principality of
al nations:* signifying by the first
part of the text the dominion she
hath in heauen, by the second,
that which she hath in hel; by the
third, the benefit the foules in
Purgatory receiue by her; and by
the fourth, her dominion ouer al
the world, and what can be more
sayd of her dignity? Vnlesse what
a deuout seruant of hers in a cer-
taine prayer vnto her hath sayd;
*O most pure (sayes he) and sin-
gularly happy Virgin, al ful of
grace*

& serue the B. V. Mary. 549

grace and glory, the most blessed amongst al women, who surmountest the Angels in purity, and all the Saints in benignity next to your B. Sonne, you only command ouer this world in cheife, extending your fauourable hand to al who lye and craue your ayde; and there is no houre nor moment equally amiable and admired, who haue conceiued the Sonne of the Highest, and brought for the Sauiour of the world; O Mother of saluation, & fountaine of mercy, we miserable sinners in rendring of them vp, without last breaths sighe and grone to you, praying, saluting, and acknowledging you Queen of this world, reioycing at your greatnes, congratulating your glory, your souerainty and the place you hold at the right hand

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hand of you B. Sonne, where becoming wholly in a manner diuine, and hauing nothing of mortal in you, you gouerne the heauens at pleasure, illuminat the Sunn, rule the world, trample vnder foote the pride of hel, and haue dominion ouer the starrs, the elements serue you, the seasons obey you, the Angels adore you, the diuels stand in awe of you, whole nations and Kings bow their knees before you, and doe you honour and reuerence: O Lady of heauen and earth & hel, your Maiesty and Empire is so great a thousand tongues cannot speake it to the ful; and euen the foules of the aire, the beasts of the land, and the fishes of the sea do al acknowledge it at your beck, the flowers spring vp, plāts grow,
and

and serue the B.V. Mary. 351

and seeds sprout forth, the earth is fertilized, riuers flow, & winds do blow, the lest wil of yours can incline the destinies, and order second causes, whilest the first is wholly at your dispose. Cast a gracious & pittiful eye vpon vs poor sinners heere, & declare the greatnes of your power, by helping vs to ouercome our selues, and to obtaine remission of our sinns, grace heere, & glory in the life to come by your prayers and merits, vnto which is nothing impossible; that after this miserable life, we may come to enioy that happy life, where we shal see our soueraine Lord, in whose sight consists al our felicity.

The

*The declaration of the
eleuenth Starr.*

THE eleuenth starr, whose splendour not only adorne her head, but the rayes of it thece do likewise reflect on vs, & crown vs with a supreme felicity, is her *Mediation* betwixt God and man; one of the cheif reasons according to the holy Doctours, why God from eternity chose her for Mother, that as a most powerful mediatrix her maternal prayers for sinners might moderate the rigour of the diuine iustice, and occasion a reconcilment.

Iesus Christ (says S. Bernard)
was sufficient) it is true) for our
repa-

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reparation, from whom proceeds
al that suffiseth thereunto; but it
was wel for vs he ioyned with him
such an one as she; for although,
as he is man, he be our most
faithful and powerful Aduocat,
Yet such dayeling beames break
through his humane nature
from his diuinity that we cannot
looke vpon him with that confi-
dence; and though he be infiniti-
ly gracious, yet being Iudge with
al, offenders haue smal hart to ap-
proch vnto him; for which rea-
son the B. Virgin was chosen for
Aduocat, and mediatatrix betwixt
God and man, to whom there is
none can feare to approach, she
hauing nothing in her of formi-
dable or austere; but rather being
al sweetnes and benignity and
abounding in al goodnes and

A a

mercy

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mercy. Thus S. Bernard.

None then, how great sinners
 fouler they be, but may be con-
 fident of their saluation, if they
 haue but recourse to this our
 sweet and pitiful Lady, who
 being constituted the mediatrix
 betwixt Sinners and Almighty
 God, most faithful performes the
 charge, and like a true Mother of
 mercy stands alwayes with open
 armes ready to embrace those sin-
 ners who haue their refuge vnto
 her; & it is impossible they should
 perish, if they haue but recourse
 vnto her as they ought, if you
 wil beleue S. Anselme in his
 Booke of the miracles of the B.
 Virgin: O happy Mary (sayes he)
 as the sinner whom you forsake and
 detest cannot but perish: so who con-
 uerts him vnto you, and you receiue,
 and

& serue the B. V. Mary. 555

and our Saviour, cannot but be saued. To which concords these excellent words of S. Bernard so frequent with preachers to giue hope vnto the desperat sinner: O man (saye this great Doctor) thou hast a sure accesse to God, where the sonne, beholds, the mother, and the father beholds the Sonne, whilst the Mother shews her sonne the breasts that gaue him suck and her chaste wombe; the sonne to his father his wounds & pierced side; where so many louing signes concurr. to the entertayning thee, thou canst not be repelled.

And this cannot but be a great comfort to poore sinners, that they know they haue with the Eternal Iudge such an Aduocat stil present, or rather a mother indeed who is his mother also. For so in the person of S. Iohn,

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our Sauiour on the Crosse by these words, *Woman behold thy sonne*, commended her for mother vnto vs al; at which time she had two sonnes on Mount Caluary both dead, the one in body, the other in soule, one by the torments of the crosse, the other by languishing of spirit; of which one was her natural sonne, the other only by adoption, the one innocent the other culpable. This in these words S. Anselme would say: *O shure refuge that we haue, (sayes he) the Mother of God is our mother also, and either of her children suffred death, in his passion, the one vpon the crosse, the other by Infidelity; Iudge you in what bitternes of mind the while was the B. Virgin, &c.*

And so there is no Mother
would

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would more reioyce, to see her only sonne reuiued from death to life againe, then the B. Virgin doth when a sinner repents and hath recourse to her; and for me I am of opinion, that she glories in no title more (excepting that of Mother of God) then of being Mother of sinners, and consequently is most glad when she may shew it most: *Maria mater gratiæ, mater misericordiæ*; sayes the holy church; the very sound of whose name, methinks, hath a certaine sweetnes in it, that promisseth al grace and clemency: In confidence of which, S. Ignatius the martyr who liued in the Apostles tymes, thus supplicats vnto her: *Receiue me then, sayes he, in the bosome of your maternal piety, you who are the mother of the soueraine Deity,*

Aa 3 true

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true Mother of our Sauiour and of sinners by Adoption. She is painted in a long vestment, vnder which many are protected, to signify the maternal care she hath ouer them; & amongst the rest, the Fathers of S. Dominicks Order, are pictured so, vpon this occasion, (as S. Brigit receiued it by Reuelation); S. Dominick neare his happy end, thus with teares in his eyes conuerted himselfe vnto the B. Virgin and sayd; Receiue, O foueraine Queene, receiue my brothers, whom with such care I haue nourished and educated vnder the spreadīg vaile of your great mercy; gouerne them, and giue them such force and courage, as their ancient Enemy may neuer preuayle against them; To whom she answered

and serue the B.V. Mary. 559

swered; I promise you, my beloved Dominick for that you haue loued me better then your selfe, to take a tender care and protection of yours, & to receiue both them and al those who shal embrace your Rule vnder the couert of my veyle, which is my mercy, the benefit of which and but demand it, I refuse to none. From whence we may perceiue, how great her mercy is to her deuoted seruants, to sinners who haue recourse vnto her; and finally to al, in that she is the Mother of God, the Mother of grace and mercy, the mediatrix betwixt God and man, one, of the greatest dignities she hath in heauen.

The Twelfth Starr declared.

THe twelfth and last Starr, which diffuses ouer the world its brighter rayes, is the Vniuersal honour, exhibited to our B. Lady, both from the Angels in heauen, and men on earth, al calling her *Blessed*, in fulfilling that prophetic of hers: *Behold, al nations shal cal me blessed*; and she giues the reason; *Because the Almighty hath done great things for me*. Thus this diuine Oracle of verity hath presaged of her selfe. that for her gracious priuiledges, and sublime dignities heretofore declared, she should be called *Blessed* by al the nations of the Vniuerse.

And

and serue the B.V. Mary. 561

And so it is, for there is no climat so remote, no nation so barbarous no people so vncultivat, where the mother of God is not blessed and adored, and her name celebrated by the tilte of the Queene of Heauen and earth, The first Christian consecrated Temples and erected Altars to her honour those now make solemne vowes, and institut Sodalties in her name, so as there is no countrey great or litle, fertile or barren, where some Church or Oratory is not dedicated to her name, nor any man so impious and wicked, who hath not some particular deuotion to her; yea the Iewes themselues, according to Iosephus in his Antiquities, though mortal enemyes to the name of Christan, are yet effused

A a v in

in her prayse; and S. Bonauentur
sayes, this they affirme of her,
that though on the one side she
was exceeding beautiful, yet on
the other she neuer stirred vpp in
her beholders other then chaste de-
sires, her modest and maiestick
presence repelling al vnchaste
thoughts, and purifying their
mindes with whom she was pre-
sent. Neyther do the Nations
more Infidel & Barbarous render
her lesse reuerence; since accor-
ding to S. Antonin in the third
part of his Summe, the very Tur-
kes and Moores in their Mosques
prayse and honour her, and haue
her name in such veneration, as
whosoever blaspheme or speake
irreuerently of it, they punish
them most rigorously. Whence
we may see, how vniuersally ho-
noured.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 563

noured she is, which is the dignity represented by the Twelfth Starr, with which we conclude the contexture of her glorious Crowne.

The faithful Christian then, who would cal to memory these twelue prerogatiues of the B. Virgin, or rather would crowne her with these 12. bright starrs, must euery day in memory of them make twelue reuerences or inclinations; which while he doth) in profound silence) he is to cal to mind the immensity of her greatnes in them, and endeavour to produce as many Acts of complacence and congratulation with her for them, according to the instructions we haue giuen heretofore. There are many spiritual persons, who in memory of

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of those 12. starrs, vse to recite
twelue times the *Aue Maria*, sa-
luting her as often in that man-
ner as the B. Archangel S. Ga-
briel did.

I would counsel also, to do
these reuerences with more de-
uotion, and to stirr vp our affec-
tion more to the seruice of the B.
Virgin, that at euery reuerence
they would expresse by word of
mouth, her seuerall dignities and
prerogatiues, which for that pur-
pose I haue breifly heere expres-
sed.

1. I reuerence and adore you, O
blessed Mary, the most illu-
strious Daughter of the soue-
raine and eternal Emperour.
2. I reuerence and adore you,
the celestial Spouse of the ho-
ly Ghost.

3. I

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3. I reuerence and adore you, the glorious Mother of the Incarnat Word.
4. I reuerence and adore you, Mother of the Omnipotent God.
5. I reuerence and adore you, both Daughter, Spouse, and Mother of the holy Trinity.
6. I reuerence and adore you, who are highly seated in a Throne of glory aboue al the Hierarchies of Heauen.
7. I reuerence and adore you, Treasurer of al the riches and graces of the Diuinity.
8. I reuerence and adore you, most glorious Queen of Heauen.
9. I reuerence and adore you, most worthy Lady of the Angels.

10. I

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10. I reuerence and adore you,
Empresse of al the Vniuerse.
 11. I reuerence and adore you,
our most pittiful Mother and
faithful Aduocat.
 12. I reuerence and adore you,
whom al Kings and Monarkes
of the earth do reuerence, and
whom al heauenly Courtiers
adore.
-

*Another sort of Adoration, which
for the greater variety of the
deuout seruants of the B Vir-
gin, I haue heere annex.*

1. **I** Reuerence and adore you,
O B. Virgin Mary, with al
the Angels of heauen.
2. I reuerence and adore you,
with

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with al the Archangels.

3. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Vertues.

4. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Principalities.

5. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Powers.

6. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Dominations.

7. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Thrones.

8. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Cherubins.

9. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the Seraphins.

10. I reuerence and adore you,
O B. Virgin Mary, with al the
Nations of the world.

11. I reuerence and adore you,
with al the faithful departed
soules.

12. I reuerence and adore you,
with

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with al Creatures of Heauen,
earth, and depts below.

These 12. reuerences the
zealous honourer of the B. Virgin
is to make with great resentment
and reflexion of mind, because of
the profound mysteries contain-
ed in them; And by so doing,
he shal adorne the head of the B.
Virgin, a more grateful Crowne
of these 12. Starrs, then if it were
al composed of 12. of the richest
Iewels in the world, nay of 12.
of the most radiant Starrs in hea-
uen.

Touching the acts of compla-
cence, which we formerly men-
tioned, I haue heere sett downe
a forme of them, which each one
may exercise according to their
deuotion.

Twelue

*Twelve Reuerences correspondē
to the Blessed Virgins*

12. prerogatiues.

1. **O** Blessed Virgin, I hartily congratulat and reioyce with you, for your being predestinat from al eternity to be Mother of our Sauour Christ, and the liuing Sanctuary of the holy Ghost.

2. **O** B. Virgin, I hartily congratulat and reioyce with you, for being conceiued without al spott of original sinne, in such manner as you out-shine in purity & splendor the very Angels themselues.

3. **O** B. Virgin I hartily congratulat

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tulat and reioyce with you, for your being the first in consecrating your Virginitie to God, which so many Virgins haue imitated since.

4. O B. Virgin, I hartily congratulat and reioyce with you, for being Mother of the Omnipotent, the highest honour which you haue in heauen, and on which al your dignity depends.

5. O B. Vigin, &c. for the holy Ghosts illuminating you, in so excellent a manner, at the holy Incarnation of the Sonne of God.

6. O B. Virgin, I hartily congratulat and reioyce with you, for your being so replenished with diuine grace, & endowed with al rare vertue and perfection.

7. O

and serue the B.V. Mary 571

7. O B. Virgin, &c. for your dignity of being of nearest trust and secrecy with the soueraine Monarke both of heauen and earth.
8. O B. Virgin, &c. for that high priuiledge of yours, to haue perpetual fruition of the wisdom of Alm. God.
9. O B. Virgin, &c. for your being so highly seated in an eminent Throne aboue al the Quires of Angels.
10. O B. Virgin, I hartily congratulat and reioyce with you, for the great power and authority you haue ouer al the Vniuerse, and for that both heauen earth & the depts below, obey your Commendements.
11. O B. Virgin, &c. and with our selues, for your being our
care-

reful & affectionat Mother, and
like a faithful Aduocat procu-
ring euery way our greater
good and aduancement.

12. O B. Virgin: &c. finally for
that al the world honours and
adores your name, celebrats
your prayfes, and prayfes your
graces, merits, & perfections.

And this deuotion of taking
complacence in the B. Virgins
perfections and dignities, is so-
uerainly grateful vnto her; as was
manifest to S. Brigit in her Reue-
lations vpon this occasion. Her
sonne being a braue and noble
spirit, dying in the holy warrs,
she anxious for his soule, be-
sought the B. Virgin to reueale
vnto her, in what estate it was;
when

& serue the B. V. Mary. 573

when behold, when she was in the
greatest feruour of her deuotion,
the B. Virgin appeared vnto her,
and comforted her in this sort; my
deare daughter, sayd she, be no
longer sollicitous for your sonne,
for I haue taken care of his salua-
tion, in visiting him before his de-
ceale, and rendring his hart inac-
cessible to al sorts of temptations,
and so as no doubt of faith could
bow it from the rectitud it was in,
nay more, I made the passage of
death both sweet and easy for
him, to the end the feare and ter-
rour of it might not transport him
either to impatience or despaire.
So, I cleared his chamber of those
diuels assembled there, to lay sna-
res for his soule, and intrapp it at
its departure thence, and at the
instant of his soule and bodyes se-
para-

paration, I took it, in myne ar-
ues, vnder the protectiō of which,
I caryed it safe away from its in-
fernal enemyes.

And the reason of this tēdernes
of hers she declared in another
reuelation, when one day the
holy Saint making her prayers at
the Sepulcher of Christ, was ra-
uisht in extasy into a sumptuous
Pallace, where she beheld our
Sauiour Christ on an Imperial
Throne, and his B. Mother sea-
ted by his side, with an infinity of
Angels incircling them about;
Presently after, she beheld her
sonne present, al trembling & in
great dismay before this Thro-
ne to receiue his Iudgement
there, his Angel Guardian on
his right hand, and the diuel on
his left, who with a horrible
voice

voyce thus cryed out: most omnipotent Iudge, I appeale to you for Iustice, and right of the greatest iniury that was euer offered me; your Mother against al equity hath ravisht that wicked soule out of my hands, entring his chamber at the houre of his death, and excluding me and my company, hath debarred me of that priuiledge which you haue granted me, to tempt euery soule at the article of tyme, when it wil best be testified whether they belong to me or you, then which greater iniustice can there be imagined? To this, the B. Virgin answered, though thou art the father of lyes, yet in this thou hast but declared the truth, I haue don al this indeed, and my reason for it was this: This soule, while it
was

was couerfant in the world, was
so deuoted to me, as it reioyced
and tooke complacency in my di-
gnity of being Mother of Alm.
God, and at my exaltation aboue
al the quires of heauen, the plea-
sure of which it would not haue
exchanged for al the content-
ments and pleasures of the world;
Iudge then if I had not iust rea-
son to do what I did: O but (re-
plied the diuel), al this cannot
excuse it from an Iniury to me,
your debarring me accesse to
tempt him, as also your receiuing
his departing soule, and conue-
ying it hither which cheifly be-
longs to me; when conuerting
himself vnto the Iudge he sayed,
of you then I demand iustice (who
ought to be as equitable, as you
are powerful) against this wi-
cked

and serue the B.V. Mary. 577

cked soule heer, who being arri-
ued vnto the yeares of discretion,
in steed of taking the right hand
way of your commandements,
went on the left, in his transgres-
sing them; wherefore I demand
but Iustice that he be condemned;
and heer he insisted in particula-
rising his mortal and venial sins;
at this, his good Angel inter-
posed himselfe saying; thou wi-
cked feind, al this is but true, I
grant what thou hast sayd; but
knowest thou not, that his holy
Mothers prayers incessantly offe-
red vp vnto Alm. God for him,
haue cancelled these, and obtay-
ned for him a true contrition, and
sacramental absolution for them
before he dyed; besides her, and
his many other holy workes don
in satisfaction of them, how then

B b canst

canst thou haue the impudence
to vrge them any more? goe
home, and keepe company with
damned soules, looke not after
him, for he is a saued one. At this,
the diuel vanished away.

And by this we may see, the
benefit of being deuoted to the
B. Virgin, of the prayers of o-
thers for them, and of dying in a
good estate, prepared vnto it by
true contrition and Confession.



*An excellent way of adoring the
B. Virgin, in remembring the
ioyes which she had heere.*

C H A P. XX.

THE common opinion
is, that the B. Virgin
had in this world, seau-
uen ioyful times in
particular.

The first was, at her Annuncia-
tion.

The second, the Visitation of S.
Elizabeth.

The third, the glorious Nati-
uity of our Saviour Christ.

The fourth, the Adoration of
the three Kings.

The fifth, at the finding of her
B. sonne in the Temple.

The sixth, at our B. Saviours
apparition to her after his most
glorious Resurrection.

The seuenth, her happy decease,
and glorious Assumption into
Heauen.

Now her deuout seruants may
dayly administer her matter of
fresh Ioy, by calling these vnto
remembrance, and occasion to
themselues a great increase of me-
rit and glory. The Angel Ga-
briels salutation to her of *Aue*,
&c. was no other then an Inuita-
tion to reioyce, according to the
interpretation of Origen; so the
holy Church sings her Antiphon:
Gaude virgo gloriosa, &c. and in
other: *Regina celi letare* &c. and
bids her reioice and be glad; and
in

and serue the B. V. Mary. 581
in a third; *Gaude & letare Virgo
Maria.*

Let vs then announce vnto her
Ioy by commemorating those
her seauen Ioyful mysteries, in
this following Method, making
at each one of them a low reue-
rence.

1. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that
vpon the salutation of the hea-
uenly messenger, you concei-
ued in your sacred wombe your
sonne, to the incredible conso-
lation of your soule.

2. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that
you burning with diuine loue,
and incited by the holy Ghost,
ouercome the toyle and labour
of passing ouer the high moun-
taines of Iury, and visited your
cosen Elizabeth, where you
heard her vttering your cele-

Bb 3 stial

stial praises, and magnified in spirit your Lord and Saviour.

3. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that at the end of nine moneths, you brought forth into the world, the so long expected Messias, bright as the sun of heaven, while al the celestial Angels played in the beames of him, to your vnspokeable comfort.

4. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that you saw the three Kings adoring your B. Sonne, and conceiued a fortunat presage from thence, of the Gentils conuersion.

5. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that after three dayes search, you found your B. Sonne, to your excessiue gladnes, amongst the Doctours in the Tēple, where you were astonisht amōgst the rest,

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rest, to heare him expound the deepest mysteries of the holy Scripture, soe clearly, and with such admirable perspicacity.

6. Reioyce, O B. Virgin, for that after three dayes deluge of teares, by the appearing of your glorious Sonne in his Resurrection, they were al dried vp, and you exceedingly reioyc't and comforted.

7. Reioyce, O B. Mary, for that al the Apostles being assembled together at the happy houre of your departure out of this mortal life, the third day after you were gloriously Assumpted into heauen, where now you sitt crowned and instated by the holy Trinity Queene of Angels and of all the Vniuerse.

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S. Anselme, amongst our B. Ladyes miracles, records this for one; that a certaine deuout Religiousman, whose custome it was, dayly in his deuotiōs, to remember the 7. Ioyes of our B. Lady, being now neere his end, and exceeding fearful of that last Agonie, our B. Lady appeared vnto him, and comforting him sayd, my sonne why should you feare? you who haue so often reioyced me with the remembrance of the greatest Ioyes I had in my mortal life? take courage, and assure your selfe no euil shal happen vnto you, but you shal soone be partaker of those Ioyes which you haue so often announced to me: with whose celestial presence he was so comforted, that forgetting his sicknes while he endeauoured

to

and serue the B. V. Mary. 589
to rise, and through ioy to cast
himself at her feet, his soule pre-
uented his body, and went out
before to the fruition of those
loyes which she had promised
him.

The foresayd Ioyful mysteries
may be distributed to each Houre
of the Office of the B. Virgin,
The first, at Mattins; the second,
at Prime; the third, at the Third
Houre; The fourth, at the Sixt;
The fifth, at the Ninth; the sixt,
at Vespers; and the seauenth, at
Complin; On each one of which
we may deuoutly meditat the
while, and so in the like manner
we may meditat then on our
Beads; a deuotion most accepta-
ble to our B. Lady, as from this
Example we may perceiue, re-
counted by Pelbert in the Stel-

Bb v lary

lary of the B. Virgin.

There was, sayes he, a yong man, who making himselfe Religious of S. Francis, his Order, was accustomed before he entred into Religion, to crowne a certaine Image of our Lady with a wreath of flowers which he dayly gathered for that intent, but being once become Religious, wanting the commodity of flowers, he intermitted this deuotion, though so vnwillingly as the leauing that, made him resolute at last, to leaue being Religious also, and being vpon the point of departing the Conuent, behold our B. Lady appeared vnto him saying: leaue off that your so pernicious resolute vpon so triuial an occasion, and if you desire to vndertake a deuotion grateful vnto

& serue the B.V. Mary. 387

vnto me, in steed of making me a material crowne of flowers; offer me vp a spiritual one of salutations; and I shal be farre more delighted with it, and the forme of it shalbe this: you shal first say a *Pater noster*, in memory of the Ioy I conceiued when the Angel saluted me and the Eternal word was Incarnat in my wombe, and say. IO. *Aue Marias* in consequence thereof. Secondly, you shal do as much; in memory of the Ioy I had in visiting my cosen Elizabeth: and so forth, vnto the seauenth Ioy I had; which you shal conclude with the last three *Aue Marias* of your Beades, so the whole number wil amount to 7. *Paters* and 63. *Aue Marias*; which deuotion if you shal dayly performe in mine honour

nour, know you shal much more please me, then in that other deuotion which you had; and hauing sayd this, she vanished away, leauing him exceedingly comforted and strengthened in his vocation. Now it hapned that whilst one day he was performing this deuotion, a certaine Religious beholding him by chance, sawe an Angel standing by him, threading on a golden thread, as many roses as the Nouice sayd *Aue Marias*, and for each *Paternoster* a golden lilly: al which when the Nouice had done he ioined them together, and crowned his head with them; the Religious man astonished at this vision, charged him by vertue of holy obedience, to declare vnto him what deuotiōs he vsed; which he

& serue the B. V. Mary. 189

he doing with great sincerity, the Religious man encouraged him to persist therein, assuring him it was a deuotion the B. Virgin was delighted with.

And S. Bernard exercising this deuotion our B. Lady appeared vnto him once, saying vnto him; my sonne, this deuotion of thine, is exceeding grateful to me, and that thou mayst perceiue so much, I haue obtained of my sonne for thee in reward thereof, the grace of preaching, and of working miracles; besides, I promise you, one day to make you participant of those Ioyes which you dayly call to remembrance; and *de facto* soone after, the holy Saint began to be famous indeed for miracles, and to abound in innumerable graces, and conuerted a world of soules

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soules by his learned preachings
and force of his miracles.

*Of the Interiour Reuerences we
are to exhibit to the Glorious
Queene of Heauen, and of the
place, time, & occasion of exer-
cising them.*

C H A P. XXI.



HERETO we haue
spoken of the Ado-
rations we are to
make, the exterior
accompanying the
interiour, with relation to mans
composition consisting both of
body and soule; Now because
those exterior are not alwayes
to be performed, neither are all
places

and serue the B.V. Mary. 591

places and times accomodate for them, we wil only speak of such interiour Adorations as we may be exercising, they being only acts of adoration produced by the Wil; which according to S. Thomas, are those which the Blessed in heauen only exhibit vnto Alm. God. These then, there is none but may performe, when in the performance of the others, they are hindred either for want of commodity of place or time, and these indeed are the most excellent of al, and most acceptable to Alm. God, as those without which the others were nothing worth.

And it being our principal scope, to treat of reuerencing the Mother of God, we wil only exemplifye in that, and instruct her votaries in the place, and Time, when

when and where they are principally to be exercised. In all times and places they may comodiously be produced, but cheifly when for the company of others we cannot exercise any other deuotion, as also when we ride, walke, eate, or take repose; at al which times it is but lifting vp our mind to heauen, and to say with our hart: I humbly adore you, O B. mother of my Sauour Christ; I adore you O Queene of Angels, or the like; in only doing of which, we sanctify al we do, making euery one of those indifferent actions, æquiualent to prayer: happy the ground they goe on, happy the bread they eate, & the rest they take, who are so exercised the while; So when the Clock strikes, it were a good deuotion.

and serue the B.V. Mary. 593

uotion in this sort to eleuat our mind, as also before each Houre of our B. Ladyes Office, producing an act of interiour complacence, saying with our heart: I exceedingly reioice O B. Virgin, for your high honor of being Mother of God, of being Queene of heauen, &c. which cannot but be most acceptable and grateful vnto her. In the meane time this deuotion were best performed on their knees, it being a posture most repugnant to slouth and tepidity.

Besides, for those who are troubled with infirmity, age, or any other weaknes, this deuotion were best, as that which without any difficulty they may performe, since there is none but haue their spirit free, or at least so free, as
for

A Method to loue

for a glance or so they may reflect
it vpon heauen, how euer other-
wise they are incumbred, And
a great consolation this ought to
be to euery one, that without any
other paynes, then the only lif-
ting vp the mind to God, so it be
don with spirit and viuacity, one
may merit so much, as to arriue
to most high perfection. When
one then, is sitting by the fire, or
reposing on the bed, let them but
exercise their mindes in these In-
terior acts of deuotion, and euen
when they seeme to men most
idle, they shal appeare vnto God
most vertuously employed. O
most happy employment, that a
man in a manner doing nothing,
may do as the very Angels in
heauen, And while some, to finde
out solitud and deuotion, retire
thems

& serue the B. V. Mary. 595

them to the Desarts, and liue Eremites liues, he that exerciseth but these adorations, hath al that within himself, which they seeke abroad, and may assoone arriue to the height of perfection by this easy way, as by the most fatigable they can go. Besides, these acts of Adoration haue yet another benefit, that they expose vs not to vainglory, which others perhaps may do, as being only betwixt God and our selues performed in the interieur of our soule, which by so much the more innobles them aboue the other, as the soule exceeds the body in nobility; and therefore of the bodyes operations we are to haue no regard at al, further then they go accompanied with the attention of the mind, cōformable to that saying

ing.

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of the Apostle : *Corporalis exerci-*
tatio ad modicum utilis est.

But to returne to our purpose,
the seruant of the Queene of
heauen is to the vttermost bent
of spirit and industry to imploy
himselſe in theſe interiour Ado-
rations, as farr forth as the circum-
ſtances of time place, & occaſion
ſhal giue him leaue. Notwith-
ſtanding he is to haue regard the
while to accompany them (if he
can) with exterior reuerence both
because the one much aydes the
other, as alſo because the neglect
of them alwayes implyes an inex-
cuſable negligence; which that
Example which Pelbert recounts,
doth wel declare, happening in
his time in Hungary, and recoun-
ted vnto him by a Religious man
of worthy credit, and it is this:

A

and serue the B.V. Mary. 597

A Religious of the same Order was accustomed euer at the *Aue Maria* bel, or *Angelus Domini*, to rise out of his bed at the houres of night, and humbly on his knees salute the Queen of heauen; This deuout custome once, being perswaded by slouth and lazines, he omitted, when behold, being false a sleepe againe, he seemed in his sleepe to see, the Church steeple euē incline it self vnto the ground; which sight three times being represented vnto him in sleepe, at last he imagined that he heard these words; Miserable and negligēt creature as thou art, art thou not ashamed to see euen senslesse creatures thus bow down themselues in reuerence to the Mother of God, whilst thou sensible as thou art, neglectest it? by
which

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which vision touched with a liuely sorrow for this neglect, he became more feruorous thereafter in his deuotions.

These interiour Reuerences then, although of themselves they be of neuer so high worth and dignity, yet when commodiously they may be done, we are neuer to neglect the exterior, but stil accompany the one with the other, that the feruour of the one ioyned with the other payne may render them more meritorious; and the best place for the exercising these deuotions is, when the commodity of some Chappel or Oratory is offred vs, at which time we are vpon our knees, in a more particular manner to commend our selues to Alm. God and his B. Mother; And
of

and serue the B. V. Mary. 599

of this we haue for paterne our Sauour Christ, who as often as he ascended to Hierusalem, repayed euer to the Temple, the first thing he did, to offer vp to his eternal Father his prayers and adoratiōs. In imitation of which, those of the Capucines Order haue a constitution, that when they arriue in any place, they are first of al to resort vnto the Church, and there to adore the Blessed Sacrament: the words of the Constitution are these: Being arriued to the place where we are to goe, to shew our selues true sonnes of the Eternal father, we are first to visit the Church, where hauing done reuerence, &c.

And diuers by these meanes haue escaped imminent dangers; as appeares by this following
holy

story, recounted by the Illustrious Iames Voragius Archbishop of Genua, in his history of the B. Virgins Assumption.

There was (sayes he) a person of quality, whose wife excelled in al vertues, but principally in deuotion to the B. Virgin, so as no day past that in some reuerent and Religious manner she did not honour her. Now it happened that her husband through his excessive prodigality, at last fel into want and misery, in so much as one day some noble men inuiting themselves to dinner with him, and he wanting meanes to entertayne them, in that splendid and abundant manner as he was wont, to avoyd the shame went forth into a wood, where he intended to absent himself while they

¶ serves the B.V. Mary. 601

they might be come and gone without taking notice of their visiting him; whilst in a Melancoly passion he wandred vp and down then revolving in his mind into what misery he was falne, behold a person of a horrible aspect, mounted vpon a horse no lesse horrid then he appeared vnto him, requesting him to let him know his cause of discontent; To whom the Gentleman (after he had recollected his spirits which feare with its dismay, had putt to flight at first) declared his whole fortunes; at which (quoth the other) if that be al, take comfort, for I wil promise you (grant me but one request) to reduce you to an estate more riche and opulent then euer you were in before; It must be a strange request (sayd

Cc the

the Gentleman) I should not grant you vpon that condition; nay, it is but easy in performance sayd the diuel) for it was he disguised in that shape) to witt, that on such a certaine day and houre you bring your wife along with you , and meete me in this place:& this being agreed vpon, the diuel directed him to a caue, where he found a mighty treasure, by the helpe of which, recouering out of his necessity, he liued in a more noble way then euer. Now it hapned, the time drawing nigh, when (as he had promised) he was to take his iourney with his wife vnto the place appointed. and she perceiuing that som-what extraordinary was in hand, by his hasty warning her to prepare to take horse with him, and the trouble

and serue the B.V. Mary. 603
ble of his Countenance, when she
could by no meanes gett out of
him what it was; she recom-
mended the matter to the B.
Virgin, & presently tooke horse
so obedient to her husband, as ne-
uer to examine further his inten-
tions; Now it hapned on their
way, that passing by a litle Chap-
pel dedicated to our B. Lady, the
Lady by the consent of her hus-
band lighted and went in, only
in mind to do her deuotions, and
returne againe; but behold, whilst
with prayers and teares she com-
mended to the Queene of heauen
the good successe of her affayres,
she was diuinely cast into a sleepe
meane while the B. Virgin assu-
med her shape, and with her hus-
band went on her way.

They were no fooner arriued

C c 2 at

at the entry of the wood; but the diuel with great noyse and furie appeared vnto the Gentleman, not daring to approach vnto him for feare of our B. Lady (whom presently he knew) but casting on him a sterne regard in this manner he spake vnto him; vngrateful and perfidious as thou art, is this al the reward I haue, for those great benefits thou hast receiued of me? didst thou not promise to conduct thy wife hither vnto me, and in her steed had thou brought heer the mother of Alm. God? It was against thy wife (since against this I cannot) I intended to auenge my selfe, for her being so diligent in the honour and firme affection to the Queene of heauen.

Wherunto the B. Virgin thus
an-

and serue the B.V. Mary. 605

answered him : and whence is this temerity thou abominable Feind , that thou shouldst dare to offer any iniury to those who loue and reuerence me ? goe hence to Hel againe , and desist from malicing them , vpon payne of a greater hel, then euer yet thou feltst; When the diuel with a violent clatter, as if al the wood had been torne vp by the rootes , strait vanished away, and left the Gentleman in such affright , as he fell flatt to the ground before the B. Virgins feet, beseeching her pardon for his offence; who sharply reprehending him for it , commanded him to goe back vnto the Chappel , to awake his wife out of her trance, and returning home with her, to discharge his house of al those il gotten goods , so dam-

Cc 3 nable

nable to keepe : Al which he punctually did , and quitting both those goods and his euil together , he became in short time of more plentiful fortune, then euer he was before, by the special fauour of the Queene of heauen; who is alwayes succourable and merciful to those , who implore her ayde in their necessities , and aduantage them with high graces and priuiledges , who endeauour to honour her with this excellent sort of Adorations, as wel exterior as interior, which hitherto we haue largely treated of ; together with the reasons , discourse , authority , and wondrous examples , which should induce vs to the embracing of it, which is the principal scope and ayme of al this worke.

and serue the B. V. Mary. 607

And now at last , we haue brought it to an end , by the particular fauour and assistance of Alm. God , obtained through the intercession of his glorious Mother , our most benigne and B. Lady ; whom we beseech by the same intercession , to render vs worthy of the participation at last of eternal good , which being only that , which can satiate indeed , can only render vs on all parts happy and content.

F I N I S.



Faults escaped in the Print.

PAge 8. line 1. read vvhich God p. 13. l. 2. the
cause, p. 16 l. 14. vanished, at sight of, p.
17 l. 17 al vvhich, p. 36 l. 18 at his, p. 38 line 9
Soueraigne, p. 48 l. 1. the Dungeon, p. 51 l. 9
Confessour, p. 59. l. 15 freed, p. 61 l. 7 heare
our, l. 10. supplicat p. 63. l. 7 vvas a, p. 64 l. 12
at the, p. 65. l. 2 tendernes p. 71 l. 9 conclude,
p. 88 l. 3 offered, p. 98 l. 10 Sauour, p. 103 l.
19 curiously, p. 109 l. 12 abiectly, l. 13 at the
worlds. p. 111 l. 1 they presently vnderooke,
p. 115 l. 8. moneths space, p. 121 l. 12 adorning,
p. 113 l. 7 title of, p. 138 l. 8 not such, p. 147
l. 11 chose, p. 148 l. 8. the like, p. 157 l. 9 that
p. 164 l. 17 vvords, p. 169 l. 3 execution, p. 178
l. 8 high nobility, p. 182 l. 13. them most, p.
186. l. 1 neere the, p. 189 l. 1. altar, p. 210 l.
18 gust, p. 218 l. 4 holy man, 131. l. 14 man of,
l. 15 may vvell, p. 236. l. 22. theirs there, p. 237.
l. 1. them, p. 260. l. 5 this deedr p. 261 l. 11 af-
tervvards, p. 284 l. 15 at al, p. 289 l. 16 then,
p. 315 l. 4 protection, p. 322 l. 3 earh, l. 6
could I alleage, p. 329 l. 19 better, p. 338 l. 17
at each: p. 349 l. 3 at Paris, p. 374 l. 15 them,
l. 20 he sayes, p. 390 l. 22 houre, p. 400 l. 8
fiercenes, p. 416 l. 8 bowed his knees, p. 446 l.
18 he vvas, p. 455 l. 5 aske, p. 463 l. 6 and the,
p. 464 l. 5 lavvyer, p. 473 l. 16 of his, p. 487
l. 17 enuironed, p. 492 l. 2 he hath, p. 510 l.
12 she vvas, p. 534 l. 19 fell, p. 553 l. 16 media-
trix, p. 581 l. 11 conceiued.

